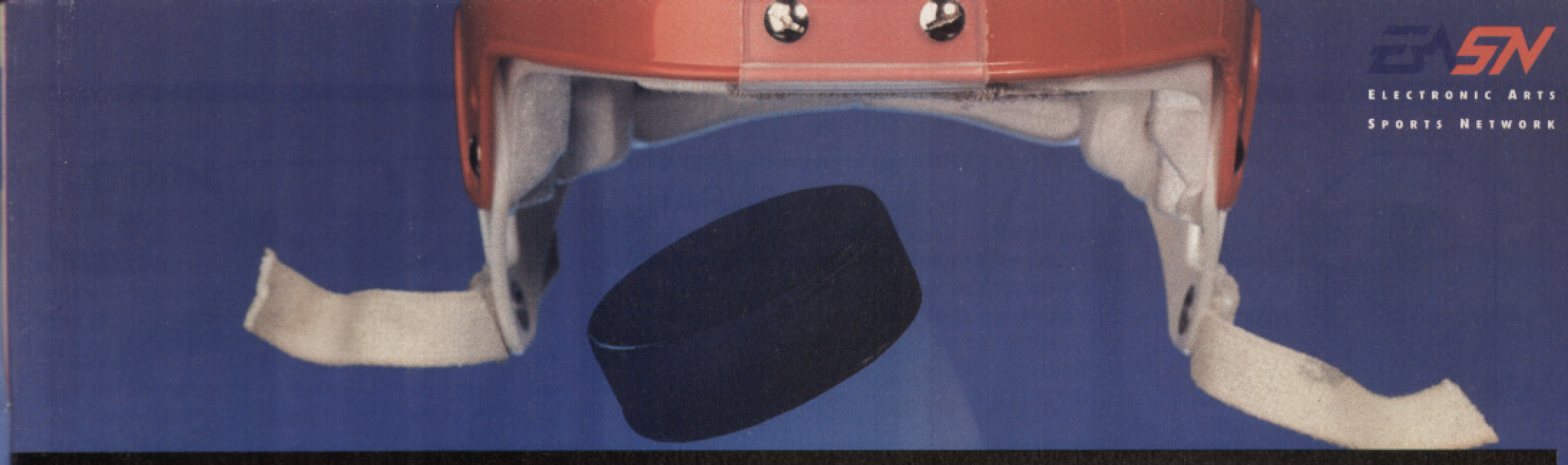


BRITAIN'S NUMBER ONE CONSOLE MAGAZINE!
MEAN MACHINES
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INSIDE!
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NHLPA

Same goes for NHLPA ™ Hockey '93, the new-feature-packed sequel to the multi award-winning EA Hockey, featuring real pros.

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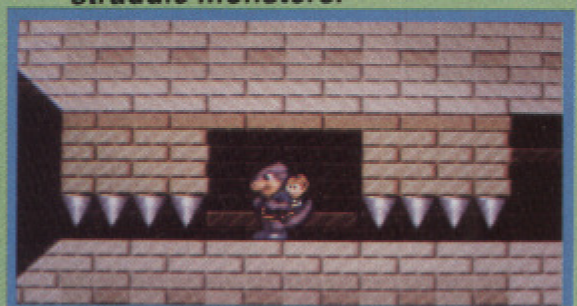
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MEAN MACHINES SEPTEMBER ISSUE 24


▲ *Prehistoric fun with the Dinosaurs.*


▲ *Exclusive! The first kids to straddle monsters.*


▲ *Some more colourful pics from the game...*

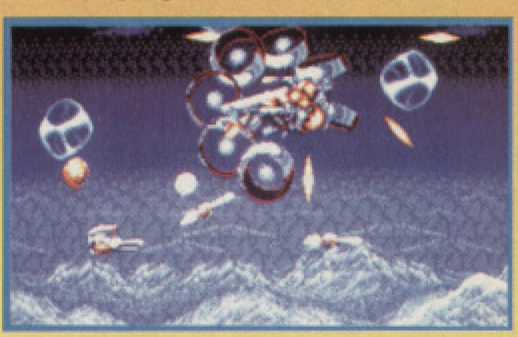

▲ *...and some more!*



▲ *Expect cuddly dinosaurs and cute kids to come bursting out of this issue, as we review Dinosaurs on the SNES.*



▲ *Take to the skies with LHX.*

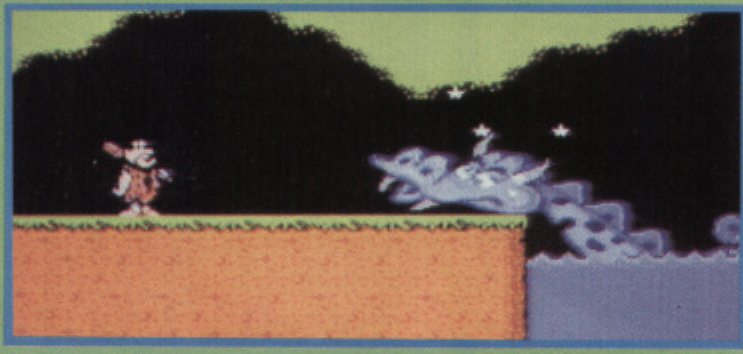

▲ *Get sweaty with the guys from Bulls Vs Lakers.*


▲ *Have a blast with Thunderforce IV!*

REVIEWS

MEGADRIVE

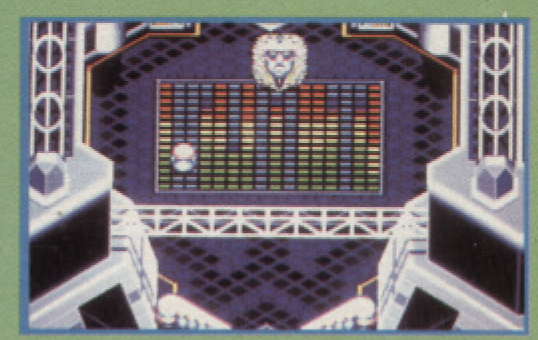

▲ *From prehistory to the future with Alien 3...*


▲ *... And back again with the Flintstones!*

NINTENDO

MASTER SYSTEM

SUPER NES


▲ *Kit up in shining armour for Galahad.*


▲ *Pinball action a-plenty in Twisted Flipper.*

▲ *An insight into the fun boys have in Hook.*

WHODUNNIT

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THANKS THIS MONTH TO: Nick at West Coast Motorcycles in Southport for putting up with all the shenanigans.
SPECIAL NO THANKS: The **** who put diesel all over the A127 roundabout in Southend and nearly caused me to crash my brand new Rideen Honda CBR400RR. ******* chops!
HELLO TO: Everyone else who knows me.
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REMEMBER KIDS: Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery

COMPETITION RULES
EMAP Images employees and their immediate family aren't allowed to enter any of our comps. Because, lets face it, we'd pick our own entries and let ourselves win. Like some other magazines which we don't want to mention do. Anyway, everyone else can, so that's okay. The only exception to the rule is one Dwayne Minton and his family. They worked for a while assembling cars and put vegetable oil in the brakes instead of hydraulic fluid. So we don't like them much.

JAZZA'S FINAL BIT
Well, congratulations are in order today! Mr P Wellings of Tewksbury managed to guess what prize I was hiding last month. It was a Gameboy, and by being the first one to guess correctly, he wins it. So enjoy playing with it P. Next month I might just rustle up another prize. Then again maybe I'll be a tight git and won't...





REVIEW

SUPER NES

PRICE:£44.99
BY: CAPCOM

RELEASE
CONTROL
GAME DIFFICULTY
CONTINUES
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
1ST DAY SCORE
ORIGIN

FINAL FIGHT

Mad Gear might sound like a range of catalogue kidswear in bright designer colours, but it is in fact the name of the most dangerous street gang in history. For years, the Mad Gear has terrorised the peace loving citizens of Metro City, whilst their corrupt mayor turned the other cheek in return for large wads of cash.

But things are set to change when ex-Streetfighter champion Mike Haggar is voted in as the new mayor, promising to rid the troubled town of the Mad Gear. Of course, the gang don't take too kindly to the idea of being put out of business, so when Haggar refuses their bribes the Mad Gear takes action by kidnapping his daughter Jessica.

Sadly for the Mad Gear, Haggar still refuses to back down, and together with Jessica's bloke Cody (handily enough a master martial artist) he sets off to beat the living daylights out of Mad Gear leader Crossbow in this big name beat 'em up.

▲ Kicks to the face all round!

WEAPON IN YOUR HAND

HOW TO ACT HARD

KNEE BASH

HEAD BUTT

FLYING KICK

PUNCH

PUNCH

THE LUNGE

JUMP KICK

BACK DROP

SHOULDER THROW

MMS 73

73 MMS

▲ *Here are a few top pages from our forthcoming edition of NINTENDO MAGAZINE SYSTEM. The review system has been completely overhauled, now giving you the ULTIMATE guide to every game released on your console.*



REVIEW

SECTOR 1 THRASHER

SECTOR 2 KATANA

SECTOR 3 EDI.E

SECTOR 4 ABIGAIL

WEST SIDE
SLUM
UPTOWN
BAY AREA

COMMENT
RAD

How To Control

Y	ATTACK
B	JUMP
X	NOTHING
A	NOTHING
L	NOTHING
R	NOTHING
S	SELECT: NOTHING
S	START: PAUSE

MOVE UP
MOVE LEFT
MOVE RIGHT
DOWN

How To Play

▲ Cody makes light work of the Andore brothers.

COMMENT

JAZ

Although this conversion is missing the simultaneous two-player option, Guy, the girls (Doh!) and the fourth level, it still manages to supply much of the original coin-op's thrills and spills. The action is fast and furious, and on later levels the going gets very tough, with hordes of baddies to kick and punch your way through. Although it doesn't take particularly long to master, the comprehensive option screen means you can toughen the game up to increase the challenge, and the action is such fun you keep on coming back to it even after you've finished several times. With its great graphics and crunching sound effects, Final Fight is a must for beat-'em-up fans.

GET SMASHED

BONUS 1

BONUS 2

LONG TERM INTEREST

RATINGS

STRATEGY
ACTION
CHALLENGE
REFLEXES

1 2 3 4 5

BREAKDOWN

PRESENTATION	84
GRAPHICS	92
SOUND	86
LASTABILITY	89
PLAYABILITY	94
OVERALL	92

MMS 74

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IAL

SOMETHING WONDERFUL IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN...



MEAN MACHINES is dead! Long live MEAN MACHINES! What do I mean by this? Well, as from next issue, MEAN MACHINES is changing. There will no longer be just one issue of MEAN MACHINES on the news stands, but two! One version for Nintendo owners, and one for Sega owners! Brilliant news, eh?

The Nintendo version of MEAN MACHINES will be called NINTENDO MAGAZINE SYSTEM MEAN MACHINES and the Sega version is titled MEAN MACHINES SEGA. Both magazines will have a completely amazing new look, but will incorporate all your favourite MEAN MACHINES characters and features, including the usual exclusive, red-hot reviews, news and previews, tips, YOB, Q+A, as well as a load of brilliant new stuff!

As I've already said, NMS is purely for Nintendo owners - which means we'll be covering the Super NES, Nintendo and Gameboy. MM Sega is for Megadrive, Master System and Game Gear owners. And what you'll get is 100% coverage for your machine. Every game reviewed. All the latest stuff previewed. Exclusive interviews and behind-the-scenes news and the greatest hints and tips you could ever wish for.

Both magazines will contain just as many pages as a regular MEAN MACHINES mag (you'll get no crappy sub-100 page issues like certain other low-quality publications I could mention), and will be stacked full of the very latest stuff! We've got some utterly incredible gifts lined up too - and I mean UTTERLY incredible. Plus we've got a load of surprises planned for later on in the year!

So, get ready for it...

SAY HELLO TO GUS

We've decided it's time to introduce a token Scotsman onto our team, and Angus Swan is the man we've picked for the job. As staff writer he's responsible for running up and down the stairs picking up film and deliveries from reception, going out to Arkwrights the Grocer for essential provisions (ie unhealthy foodstuffs) and doing any other odd jobs we can't be bothered to do. In between all that the already long-suffering Glaswegian also writes reviews and continues work on his ongoing Glaswegian-English phrasebook so we can actually converse without having to resort to semaphore. So say a big HI! to him and make him feel welcome...

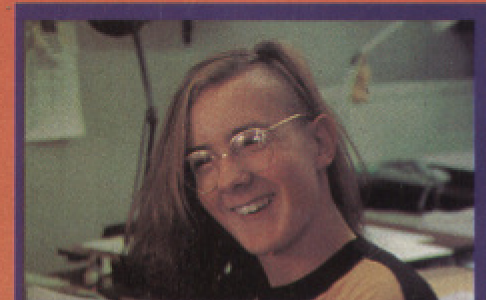
THE GANG



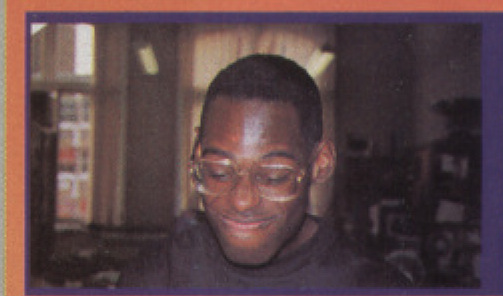
JULIAN "BUILD A BOMB" RIGNALL
"My most favourite toy (apart from my new motorbike) was my Army Meccano Set. It was ace. It had loads of custom bits and you could build any combat-related vehicle you could think of - tanks, armoured cars, field guns, half-track trucks... And the guns actually fired projectiles, which was great for taking out next door's cat!"
CURRENT FAVE GAMES: STREETFIGHTER II



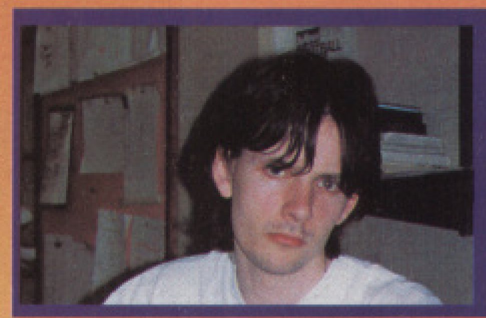
RICHARD "I LIKE MY DOLLS" LEADBETTER
"I can't really decide which was my fave toy. It's a toss-up between my Six Million Dollar Man doll (complete with operating kit) or my Action Man (which had loads of outfits and accessories)." Fortunately Rich has grown out of small dolls and has come on to bigger things...
CURRENT FAVE GAMES: STREETFIGHTER II



RADION "SMALL PLASTIC THING" AUTOMATIC
"My most cherished plaything I ever had was a small, plastic dinosaur called a Glyptodon. It didn't do anything except sit there looking hard - I've still got it now and it sits on my desk at work." Don't worry, readers. The men in white coats will take him away shortly...
CURRENT FAVE GAMES: STREETFIGHTER II



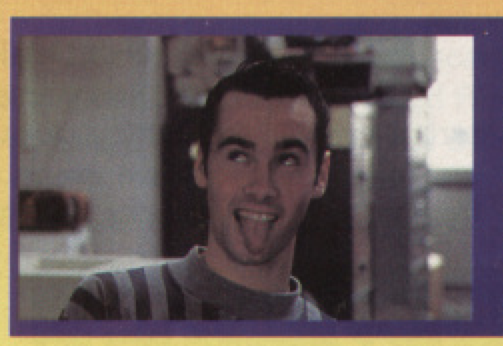
OZ "TEDDY BOY" BROWNE
"The teddy bear that used to keep me warm when I was young was my most favourite toy. It was called Fredrika and I used to cuddle it in bed when I was scared after watching episodes of Doctor Who."
CURRENT FAVE GAMES: STREETFIGHTER II



GARY "EEEEEE-MYOOOOOOU" HARROD
I used to love my Rod Hull Emu hand puppet. It was great. I used to spend hours amazing my family and influencing friends with my Emu-related antics." Fortunately Gary no longer likes to stick his hands into bird's bottoms, and has moved onto more sophisticated things...
CURRENT FAVE GAMES: STREETFIGHTER II

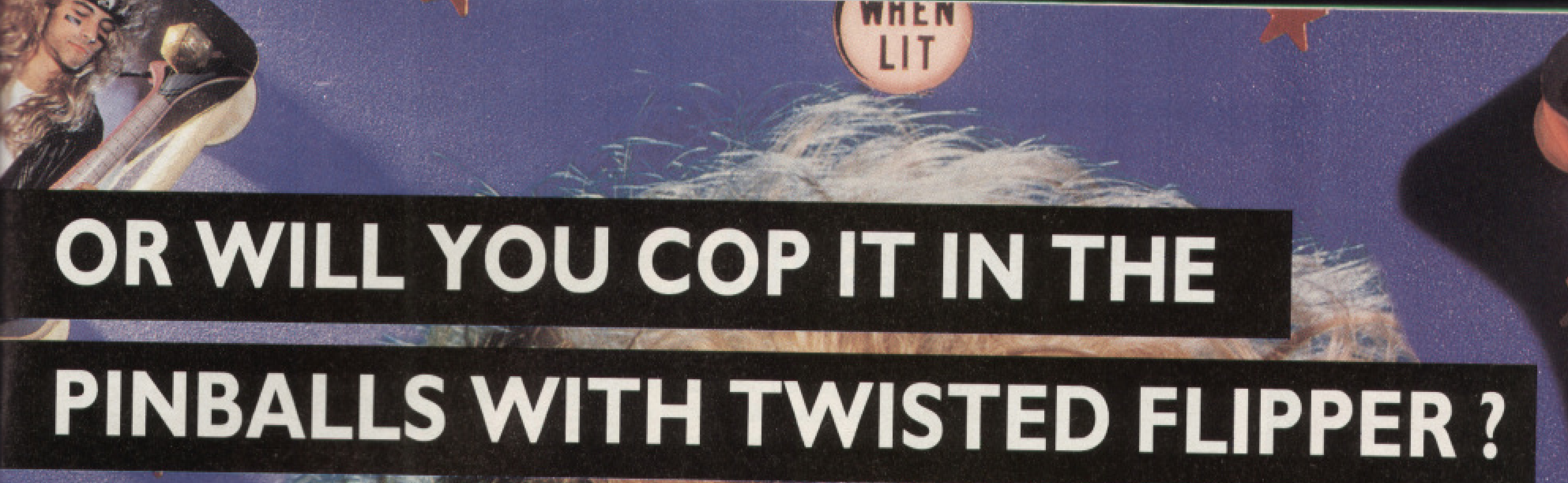


ROB "BUILD FOR THE FUTURE" BRIGHT
"My top toy was my Space Lego. I used to want to be an Architect and built all sorts of amazing space stations and stuff. But that was last Summer. Since I got the job at MEAN MACHINES, I haven't touched the stuff."
CURRENT FAVE GAMES: STREETFIGHTER II



ANGUS "" SWAN
My cardboard Death Star was the plaything that kept me happy the most. It had everything - a garbage compactor, a mirrored bit to make it look as though the Tractor Beam Generator was really high up and a plastic top. That, and all my Star Wars figures kept me amused for years...
CURRENT FAVE GAMES: STREETFIGHTER II


WILL YOU BE SURF-FISH-ENTLY
SPORTY FOR JAMES POND'S
AQUATIC GAMES...
FINISH
Even James Pond needs to take an offishal break from baddie-baiting occasionally.
But far from floundering around in some terribly exotic plaices, he's organised a turbot-charged tournament, for up to four players - The Aquatic Games™.
Ten crazy new-wave events, including shark unicycling, the hundred metre splash, frog hurdling and spongey jumping and featuring four new fishy characters.
AQUATIC GAMES
ELECTRONIC ARTS
FLIPPER
TWISTED FLIPPER
SEGA
SEGA
MEGA DRIVE



Composite Screenshot

All of which will set you up nicely for a spot of wham - bam - thank you - ma'am heavy - metal pinball action.

Inspired and accompanied by three mightily tasteful Mötley Crüe tracks, Twisted Flipper™ will blow the cobwebs off anyone's plectrums.

Bang away at anything that moves and watch your pinballs explode through nine different volume levels until you crash the secret enclaves of the ultimate backstage party.

So there you have it. Two mediocre games for dweebs with no thumbs.......NOT!

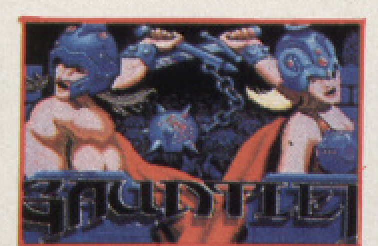
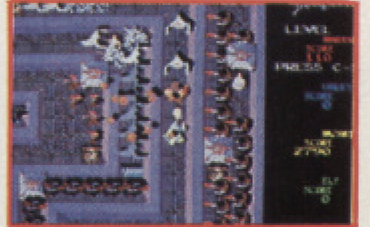
ELECTRONIC ARTS®

Distributed by: Sega Europe, 16 Portland Road, London W11 4LA. Tel: 071-727 8070

NEWS

SUPER NES JOYPAD DEBACLE

In last month's News section we reviewed some new topper Super NES joypads. However, what we neglected to mention is that these imported pads are not compatible with UK Super Nintendos. This is because Nintendo have rewired the joypad ports - doh! However, a converter may be in the offing. For the latest information, give Advanced Console Entertainment a bell on 071 383 0480.

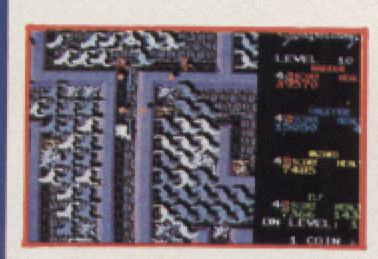
GAUNTLET HITS MEGADRIVE

Currently in production is a Megadrive version of the massive Atari coin-op, Gauntlet!

If you've just arrived on this world and have no idea what this game is about, listen up. You (and a pal in two player mode) adopt the persona of either a Wizard, Warrior, Elf or Valkyrie. It's your job to run around the eight-way scrolling mazes in search of the elusive exit. On the way, you blast many meanies and collect treasure.

The conversion boasts just about all of the original coin-op's features, including every maze, each character and all the baddies. The only thing missing seems to be the four-player mode (there are only two joypad ports on the Megadrive, see).

If the game manages to capture all the thrills and spills of the original, it should be a right laugh. Look out for a full review in a future edition of MEAN MACHINES SEGA!






SONIC IN NEW HAND-HELD

So, you like Sonic the Hedgehog eh? Well, a whole new Sonic game has just been released by Grandslam - on hand-held LCD format! The game features more high-speed antics from the world's favourite hedgehog as he battles the twisted Dr Robotnik and his various minions. Sonic the Hedgehog is out now, priced £19.99.

There are many other Sega titles currently cropping up on LCD format, including (amongst others) Altered Beast. Look out for an LCD lowdown in a future issue of MEAN MACHINES.

F-15 STRIKES NINTENDO CONSOLES

Military simulation specialists Microprose are almost ready to unleash their first few products on the Nintendo range of consoles. Their first game, out around October is a conversion of their excellent PC game, F-15 Strike Eagle. The game is also coming out on the Gameboy and looks very good from what we've seen of it. F-15 is also scheduled to make an appearance on the Super NES. It looks exceptionally good at the moment, boasting full use the Super NES' Mode 7 graphics (check out those screenshots!). Full reviews of each game can be found in forthcoming issues of NINTENDO MAGAZINE SYSTEM, our fab new Nintendo mag. Check 'em out!



▲ *Biggles takes his F-15 for a spin.*

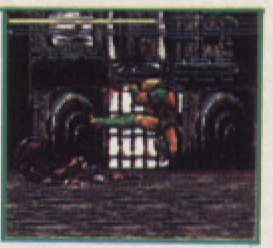
EXCLUSIVE • EXCLUSIVE • EXCLUSIVE

ALIENS VS PREDATOR: THE SCREENSHOTS!

"Feast" your eyes on the first screenshots of Aliens Vs Predator, coming soon for your Super NES. From the screenshots it all looks rather jolly. Unfortunately, when Jazza saw it on his recent visit to the CES Show, he was startled and appalled by its crapness. Basically it's a Final Fight rip-off, with you controlling the Predator (who has learned rudimentary Karate, it would seem) as it runs around the playing area kicking the acidic excrement out of the Aliens. In that version, you could not play as an Alien and there was only a couple of attack moves! Hopefully, the game has been substantially overhauled since then. We wait with bated breath for the finished version...





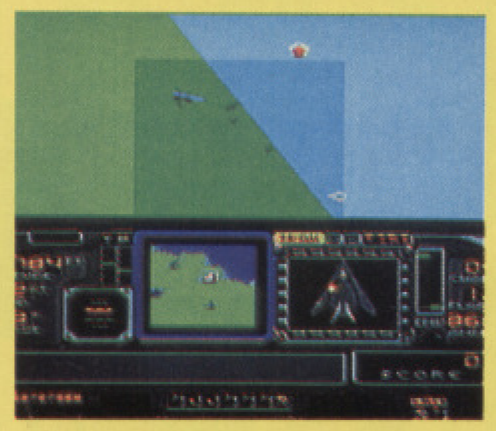



F-117A TAKES OFF ON NES

Look out early next year for an 8-bit Nintendo conversion of one of Microprose's top PC simulations, F117A Stealth Fighter!

From what we've seen of the game, it packs in the majority of the PC features, including an extensive 3D map, loads of campaigns and generous lashings of dogfighting action. The game is at a very early stage of development at the moment, but as you can see from the screenshots, the game is coming together pretty well.

Want to know more? Well, you'll just have to wait for the full preview and review that's coming up in future issues of NINTENDO MAGAZINE SYSTEM.

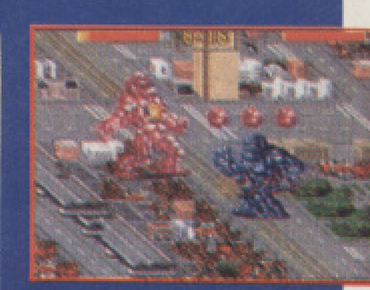


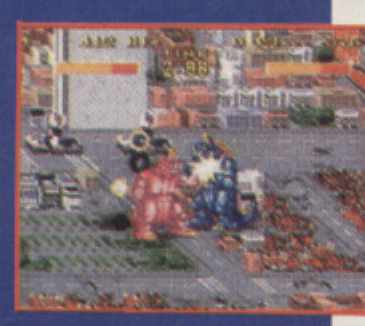
▲ *Chocs away! Aces high!*



NEO GEO GAMES HIT NINTENDO AND SEGA







The cream of the games available for SNK's Neo Geo system are being converted to the Megadrive and Super NES, as exclusively revealed a couple of months ago in MEAN MACHINES.

Work has been progressing at an astonishing pace on King of the Monsters. If you didn't know, it's an eight-way scrolling destruction fest, with one or two-players adopting the mantles of massive monsters out to trash civilisation as we know it. These screenshots show the Super NES version. Sources who have seen this version were apparently taken aback by its shabbiness. However, we'll let you know the full story when we review the game.

The 16-bit console versions of Fatal Fury are also well into production. These Super NES screenshots look extremely close to the original Neo Geo game. Fatal Fury is a one-on-one Street Fighter clone that lacks the complex strategies and brilliant graphics of the original but is still a pretty good laugh nonetheless.

A third Neo Geo conversion has been announced since the summer CES Show. It's a translation of 2020 Baseball - a cyberpunk version of the American institution with massive robots replacing human players on the pitch. More news as and when we get it.







▲ *Plenty of bickering between various hoodlums.*

EXCLUSIVE • EXCLUSIVE • EXCLUSIVE

SONIC 2

NEWS UPDATE

Work continues apace on Sega's hottest game of the year, Sonic the Hedgehog II, due out in November. The game is all but complete, with the project now entering the intensive play-testing phase.

As you can see from our Sonic II screenshots (these are actually from the REAL game, by the way, not just sadly doctored pictures from Sonic I), the platform-related gameplay of the original remains much the same. The aim is still to collect loads of rings and make your way to the exit. Once again, Doctor Robotnik is plotting a scheme of diabolical wretchedness and it's basically up to Sonic the Hedgehog to sort him out - this time for good.

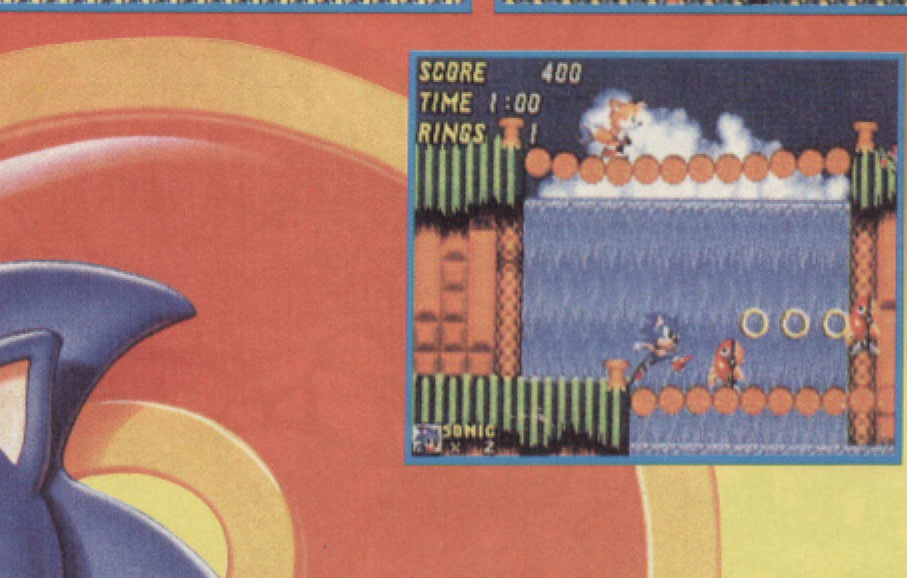
Just like the original, Sonic II features some excellent roller-coaster style hazards as he traverses the speedy-scroll landscape. Sonic even attains speeds so fast he's seemingly glued to the platform he's running on, allowing him to travel upside-down! The game's storyboard also includes Sonic getting to grips with some vehicles, so expect to see the spiky hero hang-gliding across some of the levels!

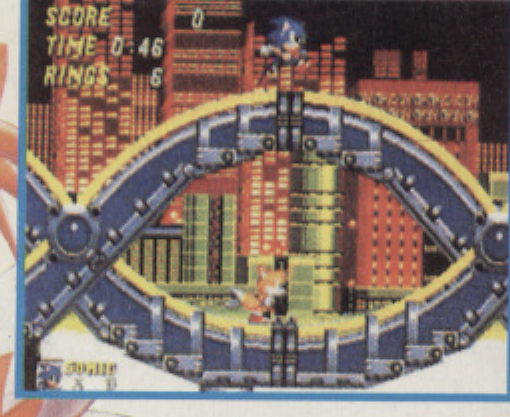
Perhaps the game's biggest addition is the inclusion of a new pal for Sonic the Hedgehog. He's a fox-like character called Two Tails (we're sure you can guess why). Apparently, a second player can take control of him and interact with Sonic, adding dimensions of gameplay that have the potential to make the game even better than Mario IV!

Well it all sounds rather spiffing doesn't it? Let's hope that the game's playtesters are going to improve on the lastability of the first game, which was, let's face it, way too easy. We'll keep you posted on the game's progress and hopefully get the review for our October or November issues of MEAN MACHINES SEGA.



▼ ***Sonic II: out officially in November! After that watch out for the next Sonic game, Super Sonic, coming out for Mega CDs early next year (or perhaps sooner!)***









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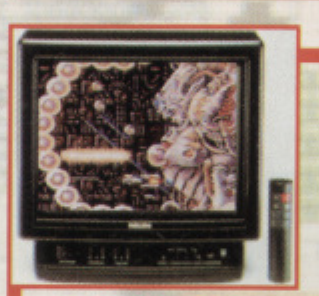
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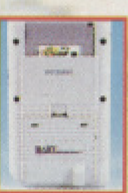
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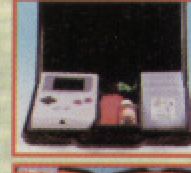


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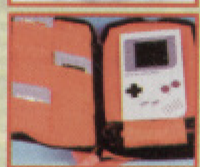
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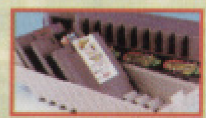
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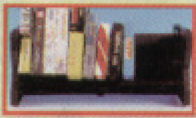


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Try to imagine the feeling someone might experience when they are punched a few dozen times in the stomach after a few dozen milkshakes and a few dozen burgers. Not very nice! But for those who have fallen foul of Alien impregnation, feeling a bit beaten up and bloated would be a cosy alternative to the gut-bursting hell that awaits them! Such is the destiny of inmates on a futuristic run-down prison planet. This is, of course, Alien 3, with Ripley as the ever-present spanner in the works.

Megadrive owners are treated to plenty of grim blast 'em up action as the obligatory game-of-the-film comes to the Megadrive. Although the film, Alien 3, doesn't actually feature guns, 20th Century Fox have allowed Acclaim to include all of the blasters from the film's predecessor. Fully tooled up, Ripley has to make her way around plenty of Alien infested levels to search out and rescue the prisoners. Ammo, energy and time can all be picked up on the journey, but the priority is finding all of the prisoners and getting through the exit before the mission time runs out. If it does, the unfortunates who have not been rescued are going to need more than Setlers Tums to ease the pain in their stomachs!





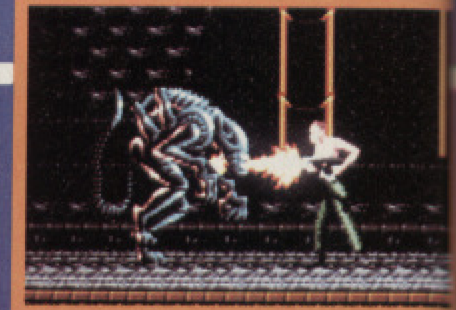
VENTING AGGRESSION

To reach some of the prisoners, Ripley is forced to crawl along ventilation ducts. Some of the more cunning Aliens harbour around corners or up ladders, beyond Ripley's view. Here is where the grenades prove most useful and constant glances at the motion detector are essential. Although extreme caution is advised in these confined spaces, remember that the clock is ticking.



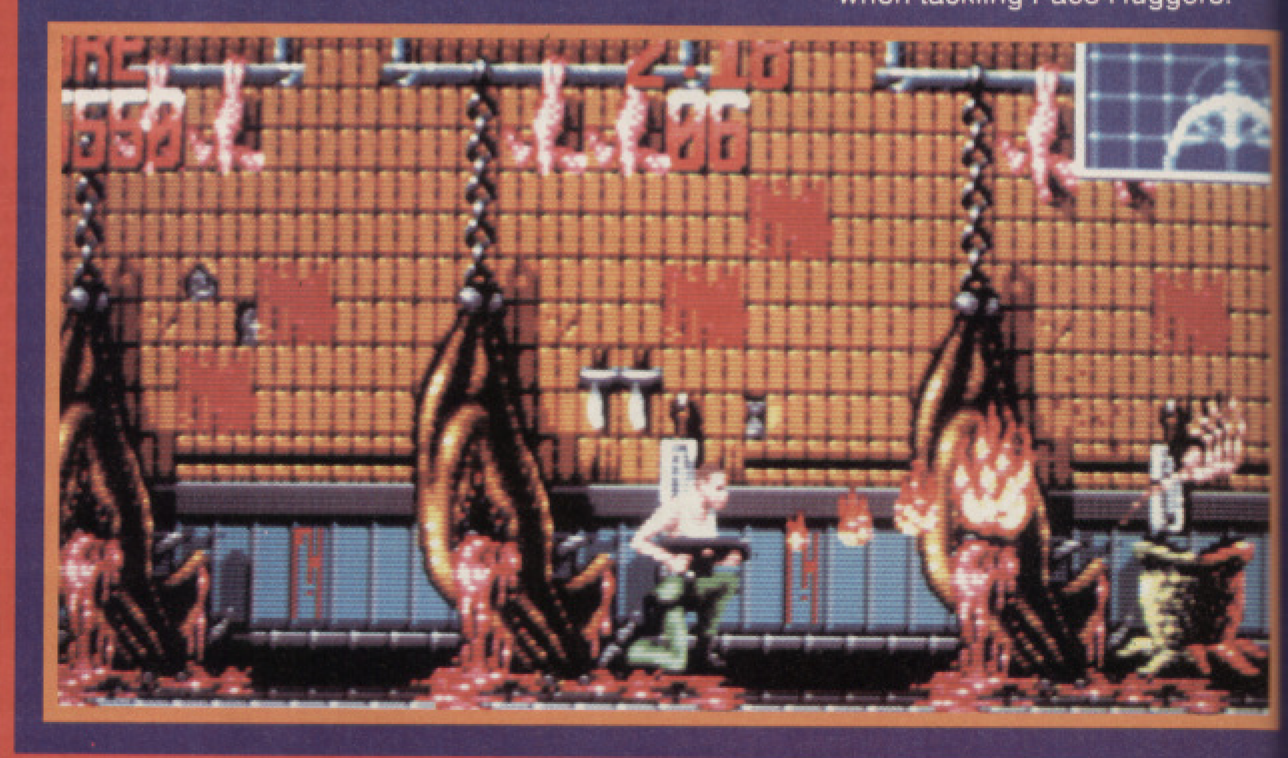
HAVE A BLAST

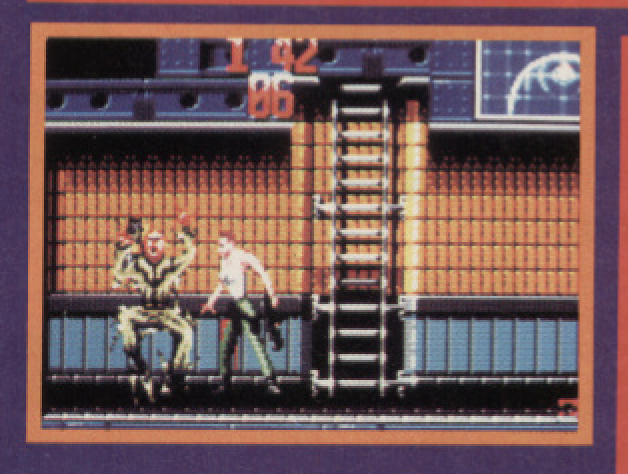
Because there are so many Aliens desperate to set up home in Ripley's guts, she has been kitted out with an arsenal of topper firearms. Only by experimenting with the various weapons, are players able to work out what is the best one to use in particular situations:

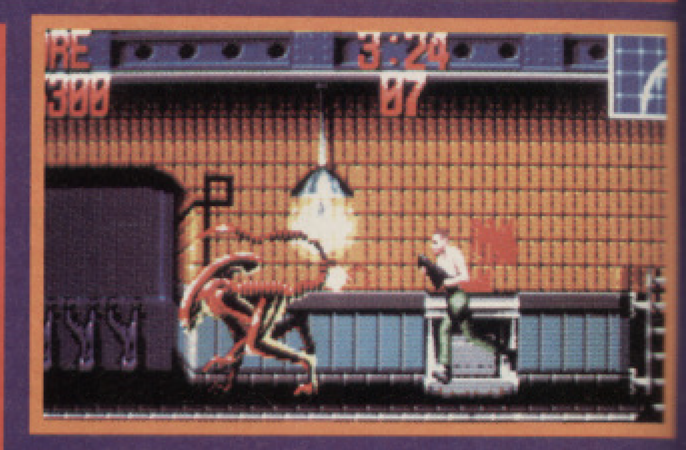


PULSE RIFLE

This is the good ol' common or garden machine gun. Because it takes quite a few hits to do away with the larger Aliens it eats up ammunition quickly, so always look out for spare magazines. The pulse rifle proves most valuable when tackling Face Huggers.





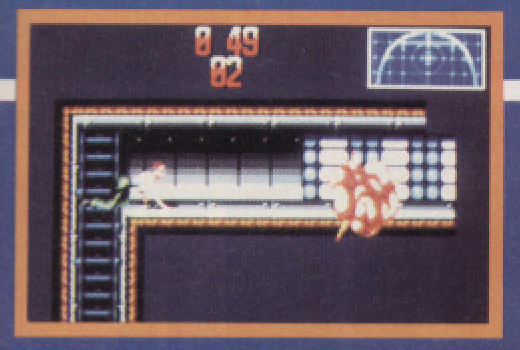


▲ *"Oi! Come back 'ere you swine!"*









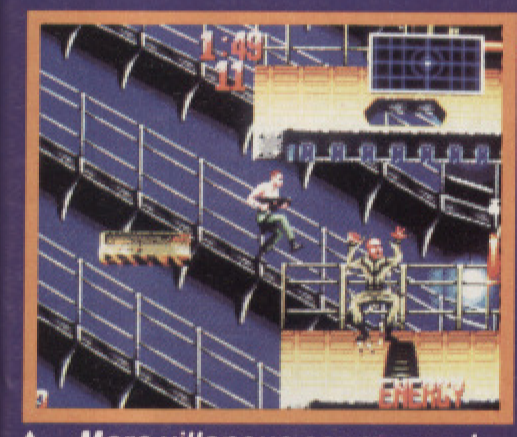
GRENADES

Accurate judgement is important when using grenades. They take a few seconds to detonate so aren't very good as a quick reaction weapon. Where they prove invaluable is in ventilation ducts and destroying closed doors.

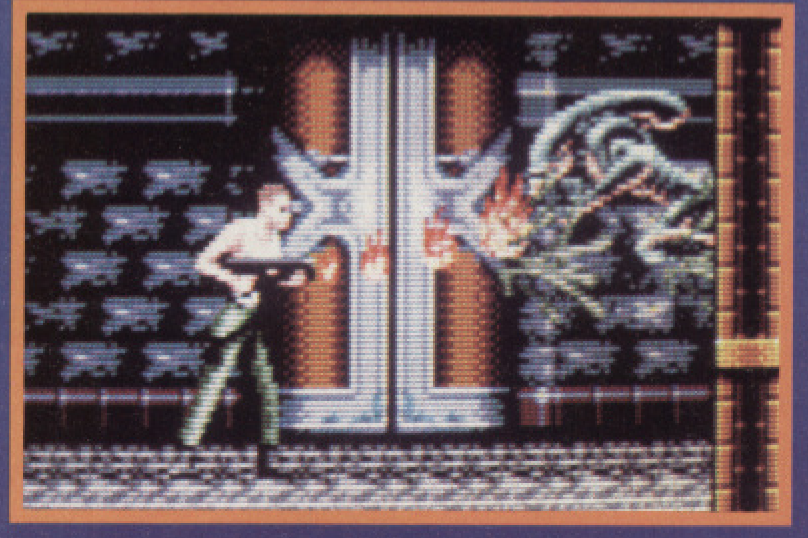


ROCKET LAUNCHER

Best saved for use against some of the larger Aliens, the rocket launcher is the most powerful weapon in the game. Only one shell is required to dispose of a single Alien! It's also useful when blowing away locked doors.



▲ *More villanous scum saved by Ripley.*



FLAMETHROWER

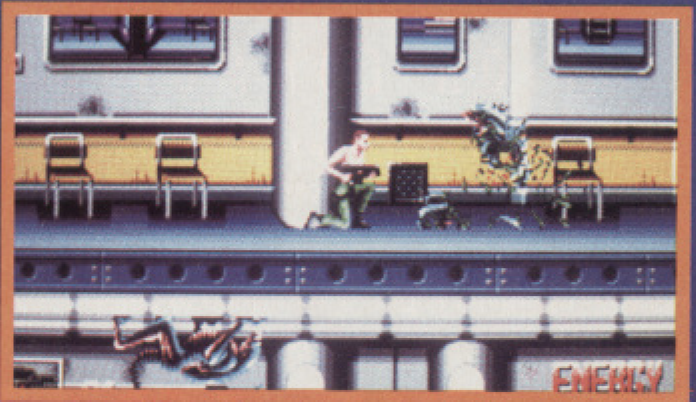
Should be used in similar circumstances to the pulse rifle, although the flamethrower tends to last a bit longer. It works especially well against Alien pods and their occupants.

COMMENT

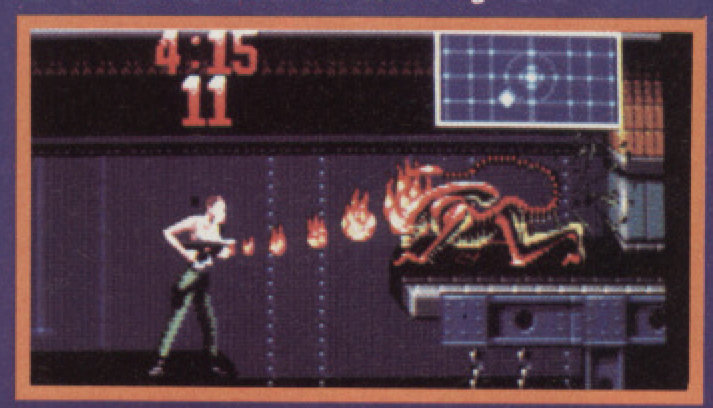


RICH

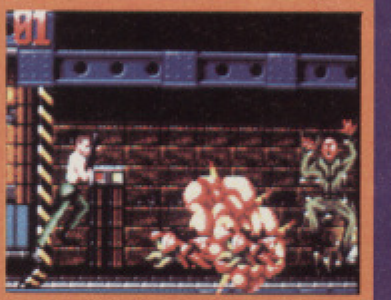
Alien 3 immediately impresses with its dark, menacing graphical style, amazing parallax scrolling and excellent animation. The sound is equally superb, boasting some skill (if a tad inappropriate) music and raucous blasting effects. The gameplay is almost as impressive as the audio/visuals. The game is quite difficult (especially on the NORMAL and HARD levels), with a crushing time limit and rock 'ard Aliens constantly getting in your way. The only problem I can see with Alien 3 is the fact that the gameplay fails to change significantly between each level. It's always a case of learning where each and every Alien and prisoner is. The game runs to a set pattern which MUST be learnt to beat the time limit. If there was more to the game, Alien 3 would definitely deserve a Megagame award. As it is, although not perfect, Alien 3 is an extremely polished, highly enjoyable blasting/exploration game. I strongly recommend you take a look at it as soon as possible.

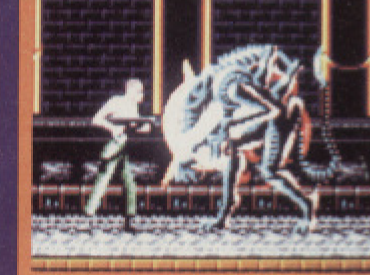


▲ *Shredded Alien for tea tonight...*

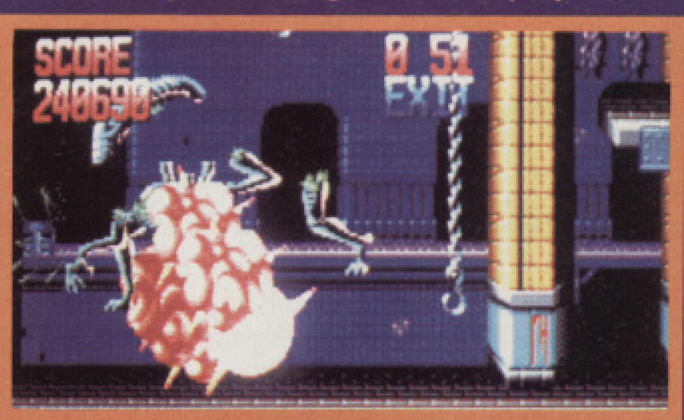


▲ *...or maybe a nice barbecue!*

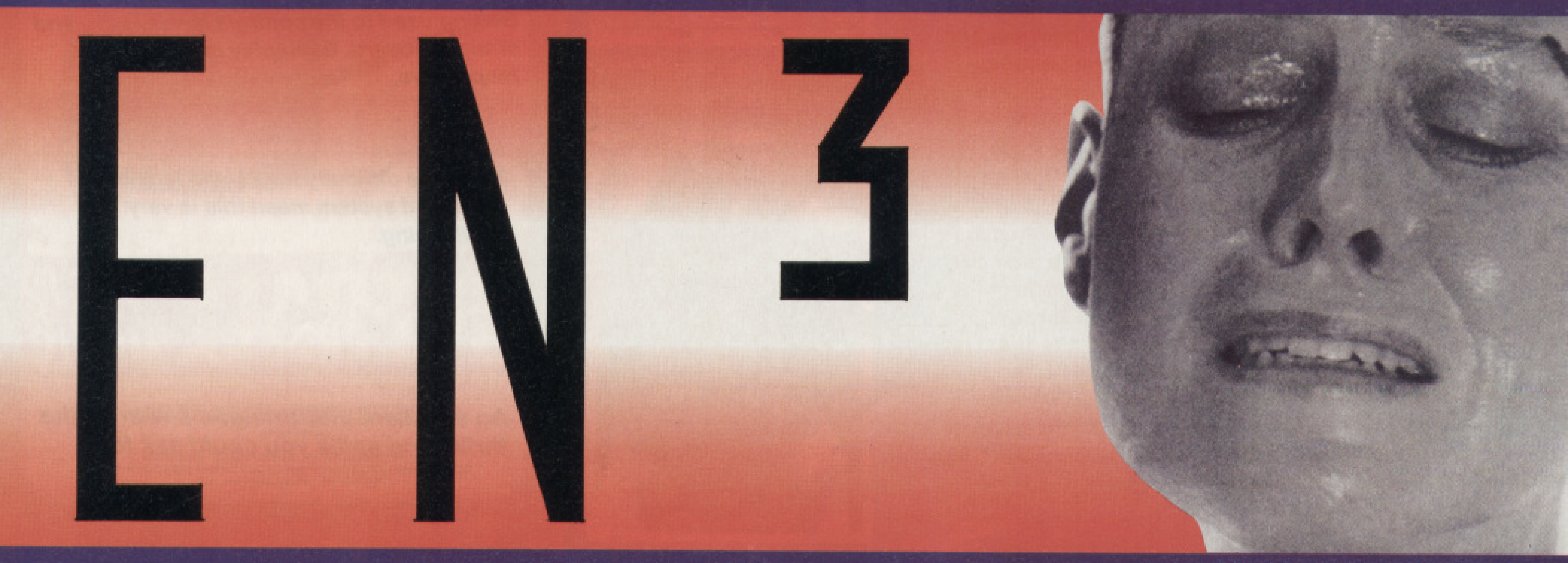




▲ *Plenty of blasting fun with Ripley here.*



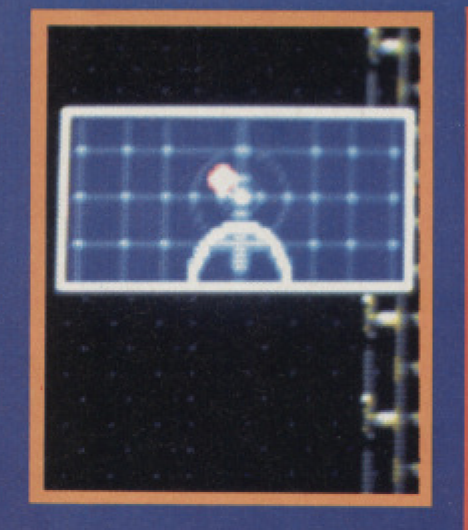
▲ *An unlucky Alien suffers spontaneous combustion.*





MOTION COMMOTION

If you've seen Aliens you'll be familiar with this device. Quite obviously, a motion tracker tracks motion! It locates both Aliens and prisoners. Aliens flash in blue (oo-er!), where as prisoners are located by a red light. This warning gives Ripley the chance to select the appropriate weapon and get herself good and ready.





SALT IN THE WOUND

If time runs out before Ripley has completed her mission, it's curtains for the prisoners left to the mercy, or rather lack of it, of their Alien captors. It also means Ripley has to try again. Just to rub salt in the wound though, the programmers have included a sequence showing the prisoners Ripley failed to rescue, experience the indigestion that comes as a consequence of eating Alien eggs! It's not all mockery though, because it means players get the chance to see where the undiscovered inmates were being held and thus know where to hunt next time around.

COMMENT

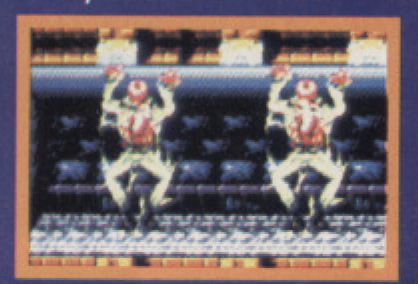


ROB

The preview of this looked impressive enough, but since then the programmers have polished it up and it now looks and plays even better. The screen shots make it obvious how good the graphics are. I haven't seen the film yet, but the game captures a real sense of despair and foreboding with brilliantly detailed backdrops and sprites. The animation is a winner as well contributing, as the graphics do, to the cinematic atmosphere. The movement of Ripley's sprite is particularly realistic. It is at this stage that so many games are flawed, because more time has been spent on the way it looks than the way it plays. Fortunately, the gameplay in Alien 3 lives up to the standard of the graphics. Although changing to the best weapon takes a bit of getting used to, it soon becomes second nature finding the right blaster for the right moment. The inclusion of a time limit fuels the game with the frantic excitement of the films, and neat touches, like the chance to fire in many directions, and crawling along ventilation shafts, succeed in conveying the thrills and suspense you would expect. To top it all off there are some superb aural effects, especially the sound of the guns, which are expertly reproduced. My only criticism, concerned more with a matter of taste, is that the music didn't always seem to fit the atmosphere, lacking the grimmer elements of visual spectacle. Maybe a few Cure tracks would have gone down well here! This aside, Alien 3 has captured all of the elements a game needs to make it a classic.



▲ *An Alien prepares to pounce.*

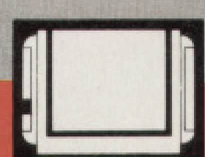


▲ *"We never should have ate those pot noodles!"*



BY: ACCLAIM
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: VARIED
CONTINUES: VARIED
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD







PRESENTATION 88%

All of the regular options, including joypad configuration, but no password system.

GRAPHICS 93%

Backdrops drip with doom and gloom. The sprites are superbly animated and move very smoothly.

SOUND 89%

Gun sounds are brilliantly reproduced but some of the tunes are a little too jolly and don't match the foreboding atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 90%

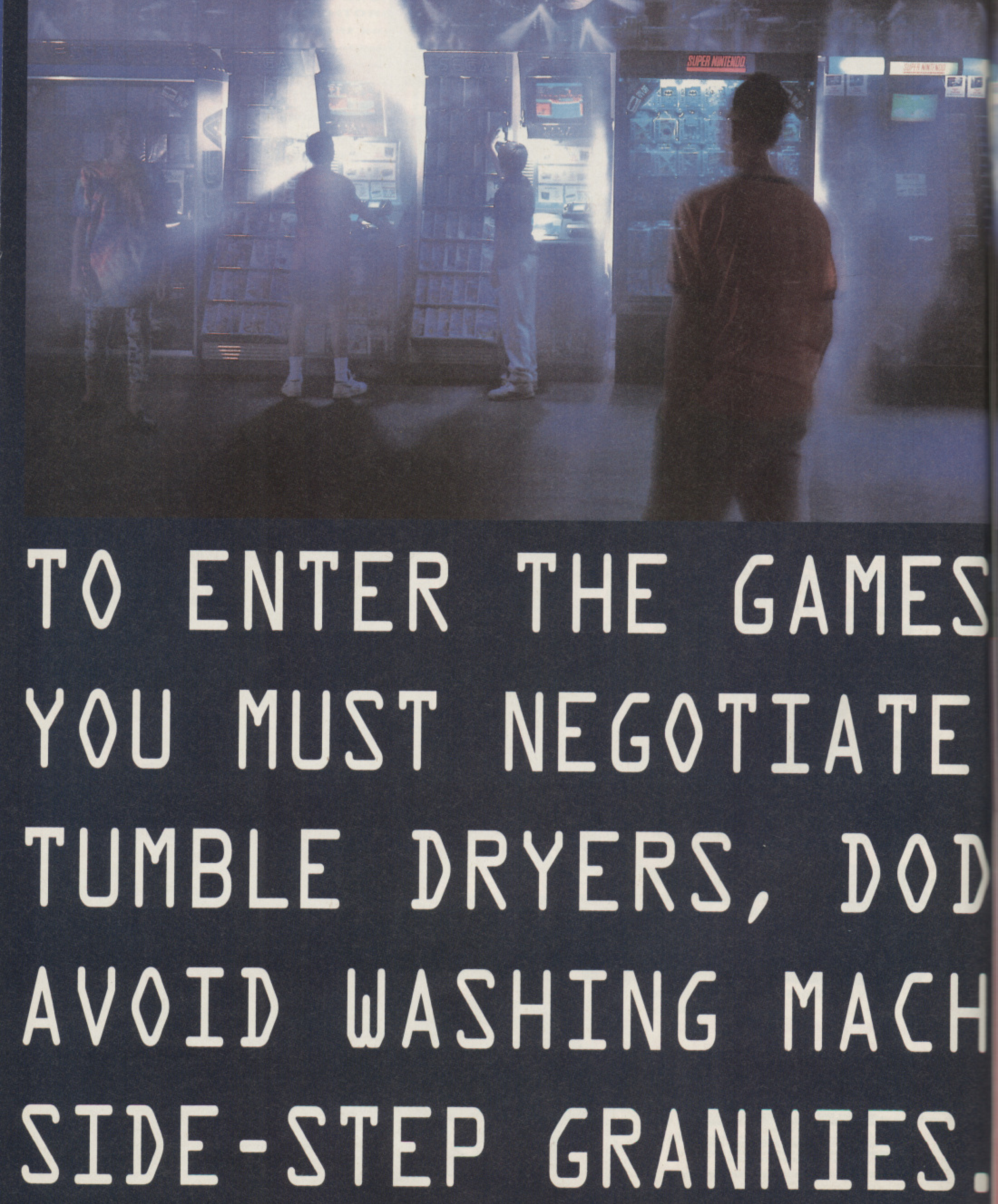
Getting used to the controls is very easy and straightforward. Gameplay is smooth and responsive.

LASTABILITY 86%

The three difficulty levels and lack of a password system mean this is very challenging.

OVERALL 89%

An excellent platform game with all the thrills and spills you could ask for.



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The Zone is also a seriously hands-on situation. You can actually try out the new titles. We call it 'play before you pay', and it helps you make sure you're investing in a game you really love.

In fact there are over 250 games, so it might be a good idea to check out the Comet Top Ten Chart for starters.

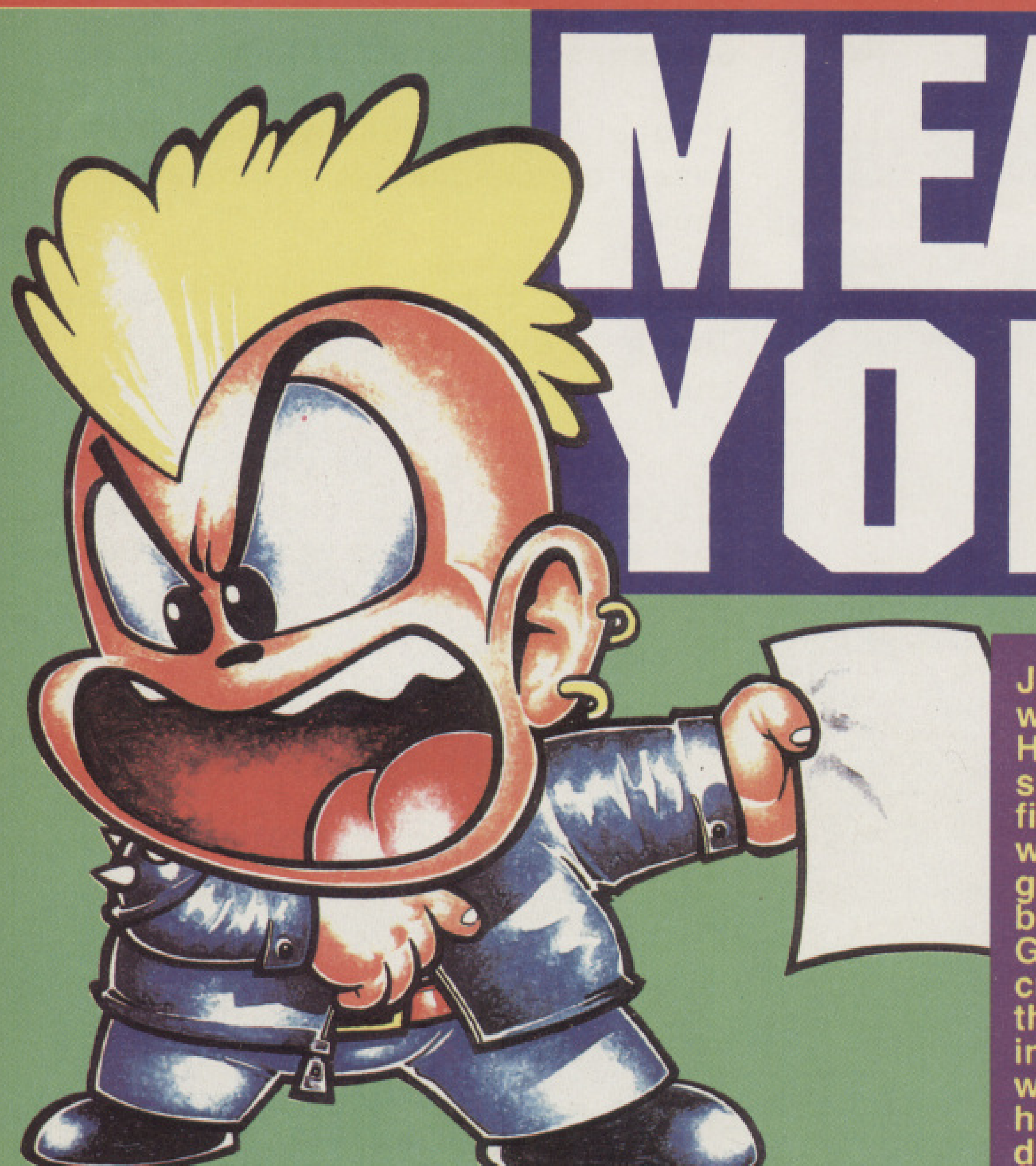
So get down to Comet and enter The Gamesmaster Zone. There's one thing we forgot to mention however; you'll probably have to get past everyone else who reads this ad.

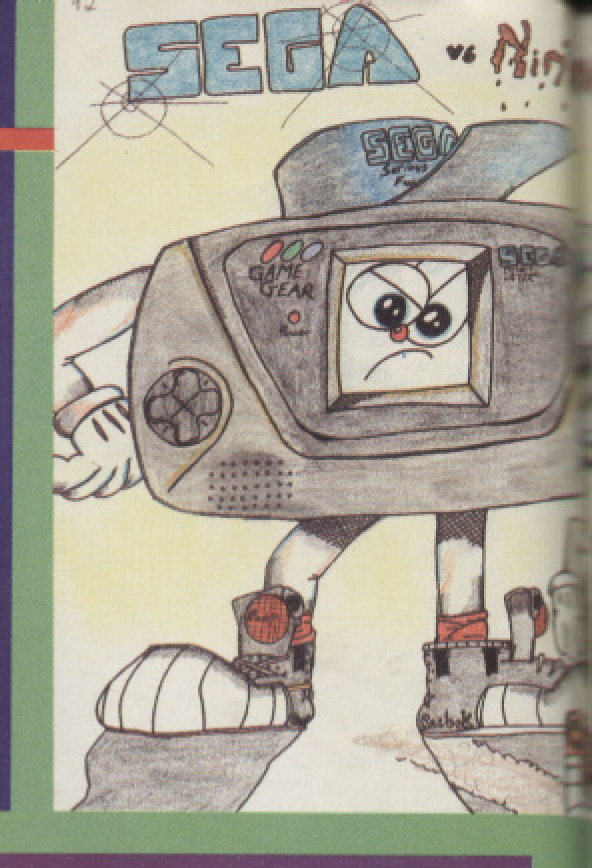
Good luck.

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MEAN YOB!





Jerry the grasshopper was a happy old soul. He'd spend all day spanging around the field having a laugh with all the other jolly grasshoppers. One day, big and mean Farmer Giles bought himself a crop duster and killed them all with poisonous insecticide. Sad, really, when things like this happen. But still, YOB doesn't care because he's busy answering this month's letters. If you've got anything remotely interesting to say, or have pictures or whatever, send them in to: YOB'S SPECIAL WARM AND WHIFFY SALTY WATER BREW MAILBAG, MEAN MACHINES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

THE GREAT UNWASHED

Dear Yardley Floral Soap Offer
Please send me a box of Lily of the Valley Soap.
Mrs Baldwin, Reading, Berks
YOB: Where's the soap? It does, doesn't it.

A NEW LOOK

Dear YOB
I think it's time that MEAN MACHINES had a new look. C+VG have changed their look each year. I'm not saying that your style is getting old, but it's time for a change!

You could alter the ratings by making them more accurate, for example having graphs showing the lastability rating. This would be more informative and better for the reader than just a percentage.

If there are not enough tips sent in then you could have a players guide to the most popular game in the office that month. This guide could be written by the MEAN MACHINES team if any spare time was available.

A new rating system could be designed. A game could be rated from 1 to 10 depending on how good they were in their game type. 10 for a good example and 1 for the worst. I hope you listen to my views. Keep up the good work lads.
Andrew Chang, Wimbledon, London
YOB: The final point sounds a bit too confusing even for my vast intellect. But if it's changes you want, wait until you get a load of next month's issue!

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

Dear YOB
I'm getting sick and tired of hearing a load of crap and believing it. I went down to my local dealers and asked them for Street Fighter II, the prat who was serving said that it would cost me £110. I went really mad and said to the bloke "up yours you stupid asswipe" and left the shop.

I know the game is 16 megabit but it doesn't have to be that expensive does it? We guys go through a lot of trouble to buy a game under £50. I don't mind paying £70 or so for Street Fighter II, but there is no way that I could buy a game over that price. So how much do you reckon the game is really worth?
Sumon Chy and Co, Thatcham, Berks
YOB: Realistically, £60.00 is about top whack for the game. It is a superb product - one of the best games there is - but there is a limit as to how much a video game is really worth, and I think that £110 is way over the top.

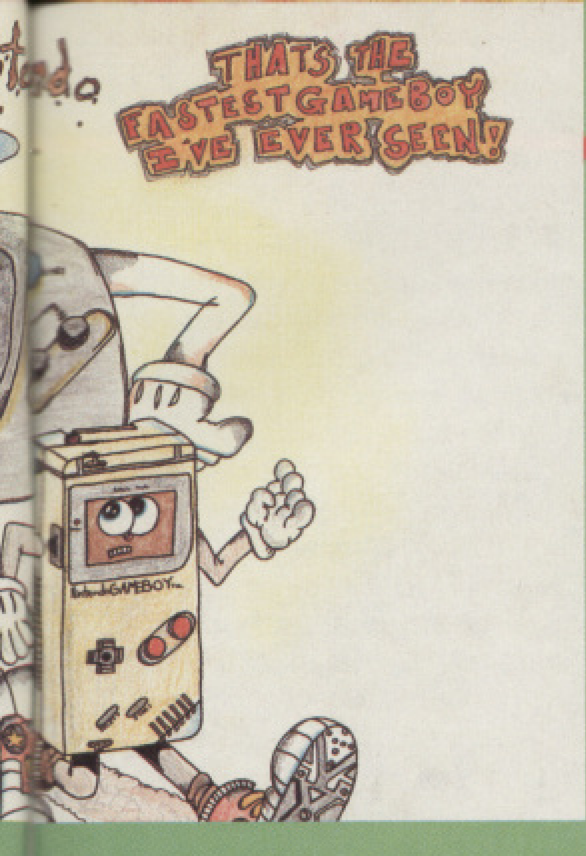
OOH-AHH SPANGLER

Dear YOB
Imagine a guy called Ray, who has enough sense to read your mag, who owns (typically) a Megadrive and is about ten.

Now let's say that one day a parent of Ray's just happens to pick up a copy of MEAN MACHINES and does not like what they see. Why!!? I hear you cry. Well the fact is that although MEAN MACHINES is full of readability, for people like Ray's parents it may be a little too colourful. I'm talking about the use of "indecent" pictures in your mag. Ray's parents would only have to see the advert for Lawnmower Man to get a little hot under the collar.



▲ *A determined Dhalsim drawn by Stuart Skidmore.*



▲ *Jason Steel's Game Gear gets serious with Nintendo.*

Now, personally I do not hold this viewpoint about the subject, nor am I complaining about this advert, but I was wondering what you thought about the subject of advertising morality?

Edd Flack, Norwich, Norfolk

YOB: I think the ads we had a couple of months ago featuring women in scabby underwear holding a range of consoles were well out of order. Talk about turning back the image of the industry about ten years! Whoever was responsible should be buried up to his neck in manure.

WHOOP-DE-DOOP

Dear YOB

Wirrrrrrrrrr. Puketta, puketta, puketta. I'm not mad, I'm as sane as the next sheep. Baaaaaa!

Capt Ahab, The good ship Pequad

Just go and stand by that wall. The firing squad will be along in a minute.

SAD ANTIPODEAN

Dear YOB

Here's a gag in return for your Australia being a floating turd joke.

A pom walks into a pub with a rat on his head and orders a beer. The bartender says "where did you get that thing?" The rat say's "don't ask me, it started out as a boil on my ass!"

Why don't you lie in the gutter until they flush you into the Thames with the rest of the turds?

Brad Taylor, Rockingham, Western Australia

YOB: So that's Australian humour is it. Well, what a sophisticated nation you are. By reading your gentle, sophisticated prose, you'd never guess that you are descended from a scabrous bunch of cheap, in-bred criminals.

INCURABLE JAZITIS

Dear YOB

I have a cousin called Daniel Silverstein who is a pleasant enough chap as people go, but he is afflicted by a distressing ailment. He is besotted with Jaz. Yes, whenever I speak to him it's "Jaz wouldn't do that" or "Jaz is smarter than that."

His condition particularly chronic and I am becoming so irritated I feel like the zit on Nigel Lawson's face after the great (?) man has squeezed it. I would be really grateful if you could put me out of my misery and suggest ways in which my cousin can be cured.

Rt Hon Paul Artman, Totteridge, London

YOB: Send him down to St Waynes Hospital for the Anally Retentive and tell him to ask Bernie "No Vaseline" Brown for the "rubber glove treatment". He'll soon be sorted out.

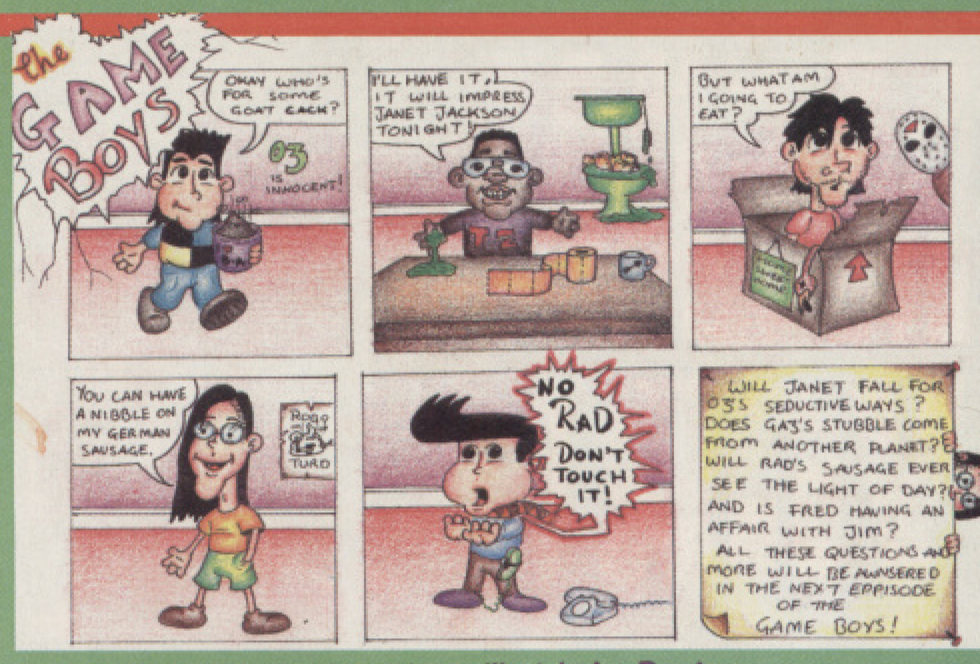
NOT WORTH THE BOTHER

Dear YOB

When I was reading a mag called Sega Force, there was a column called Gutter Snipe where a lad called Damien Williams wrote in and asked in his letter if Gutter Snipe could batter Mean YOB from MEAN MACHINES. There was no reply, so does this mean that Gutter Snipe is scared of you and you could have this so-called Gutter Snipe for breakfast?

James W, North Wales

YOB: I wouldn't want to "have" the Gutter Snipe at all...



▲ *Fun for all in the Gameboys(!) strip by Dusty.*

SPIN THAT CHIN!

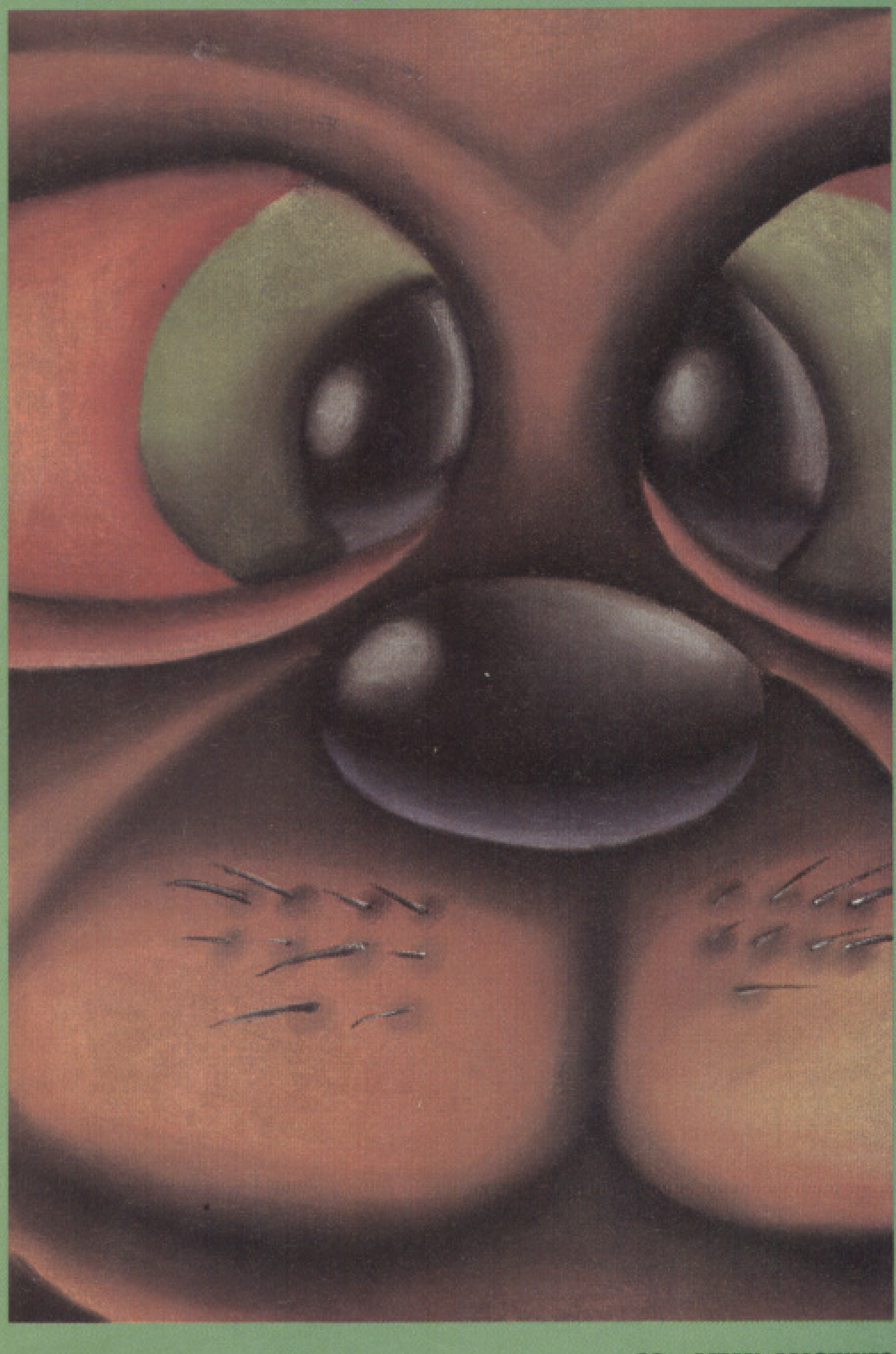
Dear YOB

I am an angry Game Gear owner. I read on Channel 4's teletext computer page that an adaptor is being developed by the Manchester company Ultra that allows Atari Lynx owners to play Game Gear games. Please tell if this true as, surely, Sega are being ripped off?

Glenn Graham, Carrickfergus, Co Antrim, N Ireland

YOB: Sounds like a veritable rotating facial appendage of a news story to me. If it existed, we would have written about it.

A wonder-ful drawning by L Piper. Woof! Woof!



MEAN YOB!

ZZZZZZ

Dear YOB
How on earth do you expect to get away with it? Charging £2.20 for MEAN MACHINES (a price increase of 25.7%). And I thought that the Chancellor had inflation licked. It isn't as if the mag has got bigger either. Also, the material of late has been getting a bit thin, giving way to more adverts. May I suggest that you keep your free gifts and put the price back to £1.75 in line with your competitors. I am sure that many readers feel this way. So what do you say MEAN MACHINES? Unless something is done now I am sure that your sales will suffer in the long run. There are too many good competitors around for total customer loyalty. Just a bit of advice from an unbiased reader.
Mr Unbiased Reader

YOB: Well, take that advice and stuff it up your rectum, you skinflint.



▲ *The oddly-named Matt 92 sent in this effort.*

PILLOCK ON THE HILLOCK

Dear YOB
I would like the Game Gear but have no chance of winning it because I have no life and therefore no stories to tell. My idea of a good time is sitting in front of my portable, black and white TV watching Wheel of Fortune whilst consuming the contents of a rhino's bowel. My apparently worthless existence does boast the Neighbours wedding collection video compilation. I haven't got a console, so the only reason I buy your mag is so I can wish I was as much of a bloke as Gary Harrod. Please make my buying MEAN MACHINES worthwhile - include double page spreads of the man Harrod, interviews, fashion tips and such. He's my idol. As I won't win the Game Gear, please send me an 8 page pin-up of Gary himself. Whilst we are on the subject, please, please give me a life, if not the Game Gear. If not, I'll settle for some senopods. I haven't solidly excreted for several months now and it's getting quite painful.
M Milky, Brentwood, Essex
YOB: What a shining wit you are. Or should that be whining s... (snip! Jaz).

▼ *Prehistoric shambling courtesy of Adam Haward.*



BORING! BORING! BORING!

Dear YOB
I recently borrowed a copy of MEAN MACHINES from a friend. I flicked through it and, as a PC lover, my eye quickly rested on a letter from another one of my kind. Unfortunately, I didn't agree with any of it.

The whole point about IBM compatible machines is that they are more powerful, faster, larger and, of course, built for power. They run software and games that are exponentially larger and better than Megadrive games. There is, however, a price to pay. I have worked out that to buy a PC with approximately the same spec as a SNES would cost £800. The SNES as we know costs £150.

Many magazines, and indeed people, consider IBMs to be no more than advanced games machines which they can also use to do a bit of word processing on. This is offensive. PC's were made to write letters, create presentations and control stock on - games were a secondary use.

If PC manufacturers want to launch the IBM as a games machine the price needs to fall drastically. Until then, I'll stick to my PC for homework and huge roleplays and my Megadrive for a good shoot 'em up once in a while.

The other interesting point about PCs and consoles is literature. MEAN MACHINES and MEGATECH all fall into the "tabloid" or "popular press" area of computer journalism. Whereas PC Plus, PC User and PC direct are all rather more bulky, often cheaper and don't litter their articles with words like "awesome" and "hot". Why is this? Again, it is because the kind of people who spend £2.00 on MEAN MACHINES are not the kind of people who own an Escort XR2i, work in the city and go to a yoga class on a Wednesday evening. It all boils down to this: Adults are interested to computers (and buy PC User) and kids are interested in consoles (and buy MEAN MACHINES)

I read PC Plus, PC Format and MEAN MACHINES. Out of these three I think the best is PC PLUS simply because it is larger, more interesting, more frequently grammatically correct and talks about the things that people who own a PC should be interested in.
Gregory Marsh, London
YOB: Now try telling me that PC owners aren't the most boring prats in the world.



▲ *A fan-taztic yet anonymous job*

▼ *More montagery, this time from the sadly-named wuzzle.*



CAPTAIN CLUELESS

Dear YOB
I am writing concerning your five page review of Street Fighter II in issue 22. I think the review is great, giving all the attention to the SNES, but what about all us Megadrive owners? There have been several games that are equally as good, John Maddens '92 for instance, this never got a five page review. I also think that you were generous in giving it 98%

Even though I enjoy playing the game I could send in a list of alterations to the game to make it more of a competition. If your overall percentage is correct I can't wait to see your reviews in two years time when the games improve - 130% maybe?
Chris S Harper, Liverpool
YOB: Yawn! Review percentages are all relative. Ten years ago a VCS game that got 90% wouldn't get that mark now, would it? As games age, their value drops - a 90% game reviewed two years ago would be unlikely to score that nowadays. We judge games in the here and now. How else could we review games you stupid git?

DAS SAD ADS

Dear YOB
I'm not Mary Whitehouse but what on earth has happened to software ads? First there is the blatant Bart Simpson copy, just with a bigger nose and a different hairstyle. Then, just as you thought it was safe to read MEAN MACHINES again, there was an advert for the Spellbound convertor with two bimbos in underwear and Mario T-shirts. It's not just Nintendo either, Sega have been at it as well - using a revolutionary new bra that looks like a Game Gear.

This surely is the effect of the tabloids on the video gaming world, and as if dirty old men are going to buy a games system!
Daniel Millar, Wood Green, London
YOB: First of all, the adverts aren't anything to do with the editorial team - the perverted ad team get them. As I've already said, I thought they were well out of order, and I don't think you'll be seeing them again.


▲ *The lovable Spaniard, as drawn by Tom Percival, Shrops.*

A POET HE AIN'T

Dear YOBSKI
Here is a little poem I made up whilst sitting in the loo.

When YOB used to live in Leeds
he ate a packet of seeds
in half an hour
his head was a flower
and his bum was covered in weeds.

There, I bet you want to insult me now, go on, I dare you.
Mohammes Manjra, Stretford, Manchester
YOB: What's the point, you non-entity.

▲ *Matt's brother, Danny 92, sent in this piccy.*

CHIEF OF ALL THE STUPIDS

Dear YOB
Well aren't there a load of old smarty pants out there in that manic, hyper-active, games-playing world? Speaking as someone who doesn't know her PAL from her SCART, or an entry code from a password, I would just like to stand up for all the thick gamesters who don't know what they're doing but have a really good time doing it. I would also like to say that all the intellectual, technically-astute, ambidextrously brilliant baboons who write to you had better start looking over their shoulders because there is a big band of thickies behind you and it's getting larger all the time (and just for all you Yorkshire people out there, I don't mean a brass band)
Karen A Bennet, Grimsby, South Humberside
YOB: Why don't you elect yourself as Chief of this vast thickie army. You're obviously the most well qualified to lead them all.

▼ *A deranged vision from Jason Steel.*



HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT
A MOVING TARGET FROM A DIS

Sight Tube and Front Sight.
To aim, align the centre of the front sight over your target whilst looking through the sight tube.

Cursor Button.
While the game is paused, press the FIRE button twice whilst holding the Cursor button, to re-set the game back to the title screen.

Fire Button.
This button activates the Infra-red Lazer, which fires with pinpoint accuracy. (To 1 TV pixel.)

LazerBlazer™



1
Intercept enemy missiles as they race towards their targets.

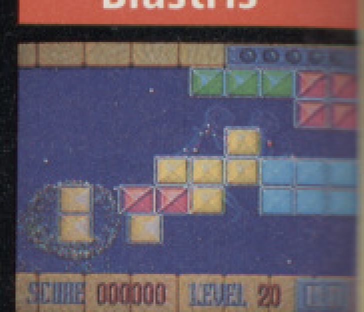


2
Engage enemy fighters in a high-speed, high-altitude dogfight.



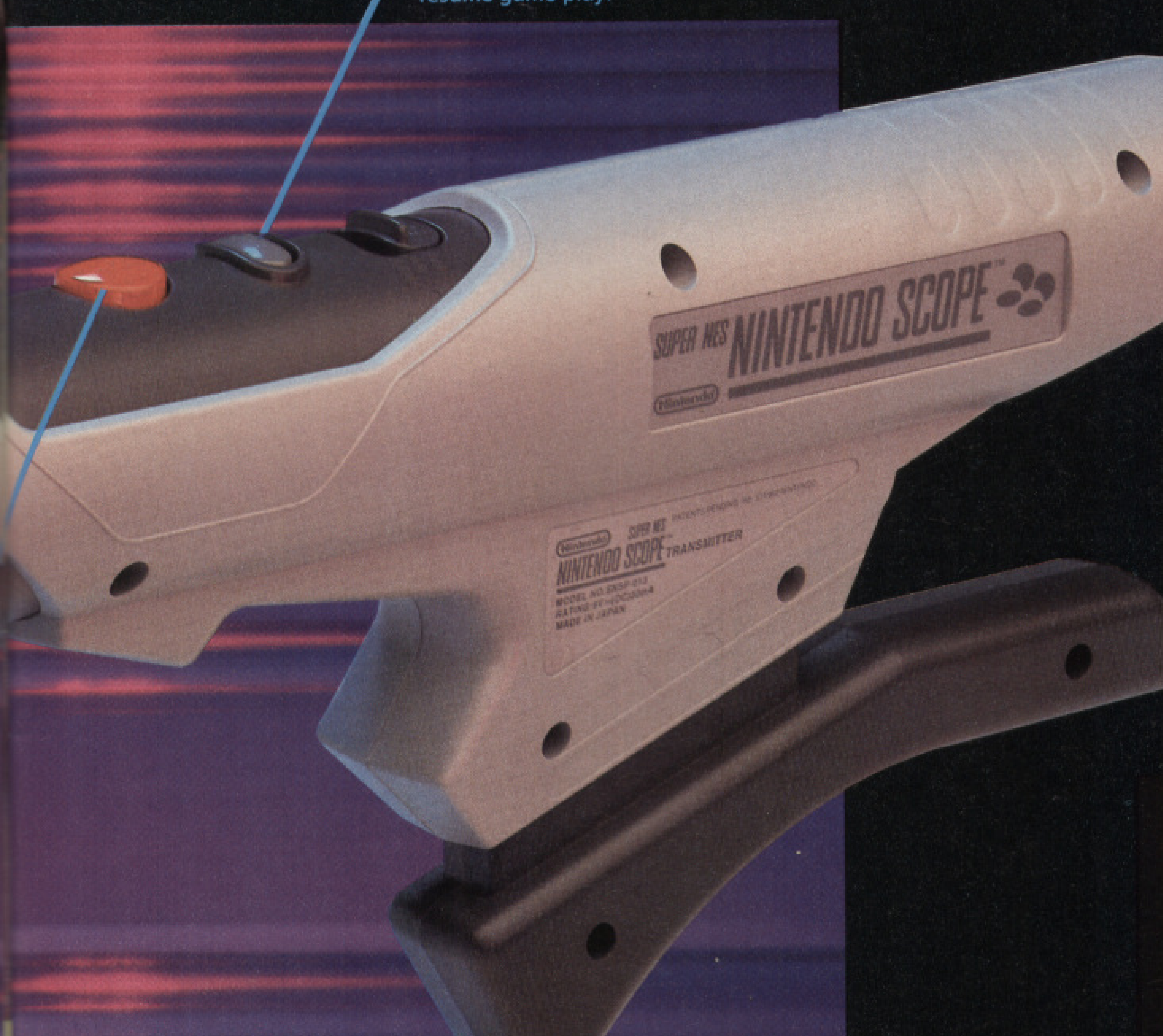
3
Confront enemy invaders as they attempt to land.

Blastris™



TAKES TO DESTROY
TANCE OF 5 METRES?

Pause Button.
Press once to pause game play, press twice to resume game play.



NINTENDO HAS.

4
Fire on floating block patterns to fit them into solid lines in **Blastris A.**



5
In **Blastris B**, falling cubes spin when hit and match up with cubes of the same colour.



6
A crew of cantankerous blue molians have moved into furry pink molian craters. It's time for **Mole Patrol™.**

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THE MOST ADVANCED INFRA-RED FIRING DEVICE EVER DEVELOPED FOR ANY VIDEO GAME SYSTEM.

JUST AIM AND FIRE.

- *Infra-red pin-point accuracy.*
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- *Use with left or right hand.*
- *The Super Nintendo Scope is only available for the Super NES.*



SUPER NINTENDO ACTION PACK

Includes

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- *Super NES Console.*
- *Hi-tech Controller.*

SUPER NINTENDO™
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM





AAAAAAHH

Dear Jaz
I recently purchased a SNES and would like to know...
1. When will Top Gear and Super Contra be released for the British SNES?
2. Is Turtles IV any good? When will it be out in the UK?
3. I am thinking of using a mail order service, please recommend one I can trust.
Charlie Woodrow, London
JAZ: 1. September. 2. Yes. Later this year. 3. Check out the names of our import game suppliers.

Way-hey-hey! It's that questions and answering time of the month when once again Jazza dons his special answering motorcycle helmet and comes up with the solutions to your conundrums. If you've got anything you need to know, write in to: JAZZA'S MOST EXCELLENT CBR400 WITH FIREBLADE COLOURS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, MEAN MACHINES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

WHEEEEE

Dear Jazza,
Please could you answer the following questions:
1. When is Star Wars appearing officially for the SNES?
2. Why are MEAN MACHINES screen shots better than C+VG's when they're both by the same company?
3. Who is Dwayne Minton?
4. What did John Madden's '93 look like at the CES show?
James Tedstone, Gwent
JAZ: 1. Around about Easter 1993. 2. We use photographs while CVG use screen grabs. 3. You don't want to know. 4. It wasn't on display - but we'll be having an exclusive preview later on this year as soon as it's ready.

WHOOOOOO

Dear Jazza
Could you please answer my intellectually stimulating questions.
1. Which is the best golf game on the SNES out of Hole In One, Jack Nicklaus Golf, PGA Golf Tour, IREM Skins Game, Pebble Beach Golf and Augusta Open Golf?
2. When will the Jap Famicom CD system be available on import?
3. Will Sega's Menacer light gun be compatible with Mega CD games?
4. I was a little confused after reading your CES special report. Would I be correct in saying that there will be another Batman game on the Megadrive by Sunsoft, and that Batman Returns will also appear an the MD by Sega, and that Batman: Joker's Revenge will be by Sunsoft and Sega!?
Russell Roberts, Salford, Manchester
JAZ: 1. Difficult to say really. I don't think any of them are particularly outstanding. The Irem Skins game is about the most promising I've played so far, but that was unfinished. 2. As soon as it's released late this year. 3. Yes. 4. The Sunsoft game is Batman: Joker's Revenge and is based on the comic books. Sega's game is based on the new Batman film.

AAAIIIEEEE

Dear Jaz
I've just bought a copy of Street Fighter 2 for my SNES and there was a leaflet in the box, on the leaflet was an ad for a game called Breath Of Fire. Have you seen this game and, if so, is it any good? It also showed a picture of the Capcom Power Stick Fighter, when will this be available?
Mark Watson, Bracebridge, Lincoln
JAZ: The game isn't out yet, but as soon as it is, we'll be reviewing it.

BLAAAAAAAAA

Dear Jaz
I've got some questions for you.
1. In last month's CES special you said the Terminator was coming out for the SNES. Is it like the Sega or PC version or is it an original game?
2. Will Total Carnage ever come out on the SNES?
3. Is Toxic Crusaders any good on the SNES? Is it a beat 'em up or a platform game?
4. Will there ever be a Red Dwarf (the TV series) game?
Jerry "Jeremy" James, The big old World
JAZ: 1. It's currently under review - it could well be an original game by the time its finished. 2. Yes - next year. 3. Programming has only just started - there's nothing to see yet. 4. No.



MMMMUUUAAAAAAH

Jaz Man
You couldn't do us a favour and answer a few questions could you?
1. What do you think of Pitfighter and Blades Of Steel on the Gameboy?

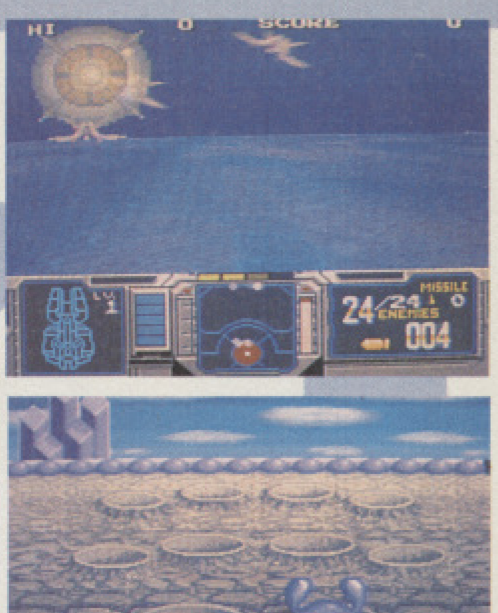
OOOOYAHHHH

Dear Jazza
I have only on measly question to ask you but please answer it.

1. When the Super Scope bundle package comes out at Xmas, will it still have two controllers and Mario IV bundled with it?

Clark Wiseman, Banbury
JAZ: Nintendo keep changing their minds - as soon as the final bundle is announced, we'll fill you in on its contents.





EEEOOOOIIII

Dear Jazzy R
I would be pleased if you answer these questions for me.

1. When you push the D-Pad up in Splatterhouse II, why does it look like Rick is taking a leak?

2. How can Sega justify the price of £45 per CD game? I know they reckon it's because of all the programming and stuff, but look at the price of music CD's. Music companies spend millions on recording studios and equipment etc, yet their finished items cost less than half the price of CD games.



3. What's the point of bringing out a game on CD anyway? I mean, they play the same as cartridges except for a few snazzy intros which don't alter the gameplay whatsoever.

Rob Robinson, Rotherham, South Yorks
JAZ: 1. 'Cos he is. 2. There's loads more cash investment in a CD game than there is in CD music. The prices reflect that difference in cost. 3. You obviously haven't seen some of the latest CD games...



GNNNNNNN

Dearest Jaz
Please could you answer my questions so that I can make my mind up about whether I buy a SNES or not.

1. There is a rumour that there will be a Super Final Fight where you can play all the characters and has all the levels of the arcade. Is this true and when is it coming out?

2. I am told that the SCART SNES is faster than PAL ones. Is this true? Is there any way I can convert a UK PAL SNES into a SCART one, If so how?

David Dinneen, Sunningdale, Berkshire
JAZ: 1. No. 2. Yes and no.

EEAAAOOOOOG

Dear Jaz
Could you please provide me with the answers to the following humble questions?

1. Is anyone planning to convert Bubble Bobble and Parasol Stars to the Megadrive to complete the trilogy?

2. Why are all Megadrive RPG's set in medieval times? Why can't we have games like Monkey Island or Leisure Suit Larry?

3. Remember that 3-in-1 coin-op Three Wonders? Will it be converted and, if so to, which machine?

4. Is there any more news on the Battletech centre I read about in C+VG?

5. You're joking about John Madden '93 aren't you?

6. What is your dream car?

D Ankrah, North London
JAZ: 1. No. 2. They're coming out on the Mega-CD. 3. I don't think so, but if it ever was it would appear on the Super NES. 4. No, which is a shame because it's totally mega. 5. No. 6. Ooooo. Probably either a Ferrari GTO or maybe a race-prepared Ford GT40 (classic 60's very highly powered racing car). They both cost millions.

AAAAAAAOOOOOW

Dear Jaz
You're a clever guy so answer me this.

When you reviewed Street Fighter 2 it looked arcade perfect but in N-Force the graphics were all red and blotchy. Why was this and what is the official release date of this "good graphics" version?

Jon Elson, Rainham, Essex
JAZ: N-Force took the pictures from a foreign magazine and scanned them into their system, whereas we actually had the game and took the pictures ourselves.

DEEEEEAAAAAH

Dear Jazziness
Please answer these questions.

1. Is it true that Streets of Rage 2 is going to be a 16-meg cartridge on the Megadrive.

2. Is the Megadrive capable of an arcade perfect version of Street Fighter 2? If not, what about the Mega CD?

3. What do you think is the best current Megadrive game?

Challenge be coming out?

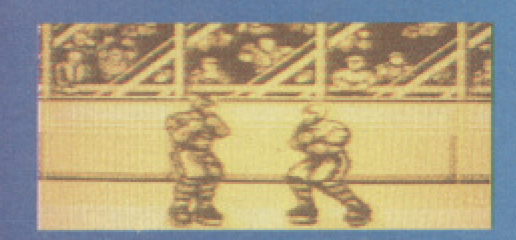
That's all, thanks.

Matthew Jowett, Bradford, West Yorks
JAZ: 1. Yep!. 2. Possibly - although it would be pushed to its limits. 3. Dunno. Probably Taz-Mania. 4. December.

2. Is there any news of the colour Gameboy? I've heard that it is going to be solar powered instead of batteries. Will it be the same size?

3. What Gameboy game has the biggest Meg size?

Stuart Hughes, Rhondda, Mid Wales
JAZ: 1. Bad and good. 2. There is no news on the colour Gameboy. 3. There are loads of two-meg games - that's the biggest size so far.





HOOOOOOOA AA AR

Dear Jaz
I was on th verge of buying a UK SNES when I noticed in MEAN MACHINES that they now cost around £55 in America. This made me rethink immediately. There are just three questions I'm still not sure of.

1. Will an American SNES (SCART) work on a British TV (with a SCART socket)?

2. Can you get an adaptor that will allow you to play English games on the American SNES?

3. Will Street Fighter II be available in the UK soon and at an affordable price?

Oliver Bray, Fleet, Hampshire

JAZ: 1. No. 2. No. 3. You'll have to wait until November. The price has yet to be sorted.

BMMMMMMOOO

Dear Jaz me old Billy Jack
Please answer these questions for me as I am a desperate man.

1. If the CPU on a SNES is a lot slower than a Megadrive's, how does it manage to run Street Fighter 2 at arcade speed?

2. How do you perform the spinning piledriver with Zangief?

3. How come some graphics on some mediocre Megadrive games are total crap, like Fastest One. Whilst others such as Gaiaries have brilliant, eye-popping, arcade-style graphics?

4. Is Aeroblasters on the Megadrive just the same as the arcade?

Lee Derbyshire, Wigan

JAZ: 1. Clever programming. 2. A full 360 degree joypad movement followed by punch. 3. It depends on the graphic artist - some are good and some are bad. 4. It's fairly similar.

FWOOOOOO

Dear Jaz
I would be very grateful if you would answer the following questions:

1. Is it true that the Master System is going out?

2. If it is, will its games be reduced in price?

3. Will Moonwalker, EA Hockey or WWF Superstars ever come out on the Game Gear? If so, when?

4. What is the best game on the Master System?

William Richards, Halkyn, Clwyd

JAZ: 1. Going out where? Down the shops? 2. Probably. 3. No. 4. Wonderboy III I suppose.





YOOOOOOAAAA AAR

Dear Jaz
I own a Megadrive and seeing as your mag is the best in the cosmos and that you're so cool, I thought I'd ask you a few questions.

1. I was wondering if Rainbow Islands or New Zealand Story are ever going to be "officially" released for the Megadrive? I've tried several mail order companies, but seeing as I live in Australia it's a real problem - there is not one shop I know of that imports Japanese Megadrive carts, so they are considered real collectors items over here. So please answer my question, and if they are not going to be released officially, then why?

Dean Wiley, Townsville, Australian

JAZ: I doubt whether either will ever be officially released - Sega have loads of other, newer, better games to "officially" release.

GOOOOOOOOO OGH

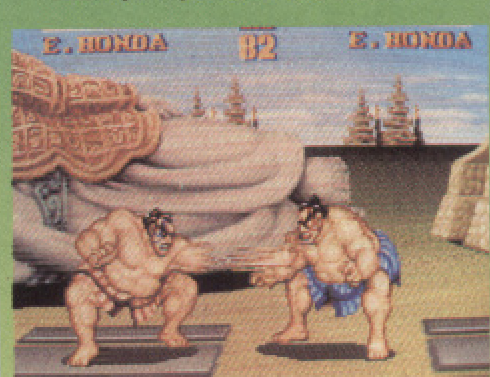
Dear Jaz
I have recently purchased Street Fighter II and have some questions for you as I only have the Japanese version and cannot understand the instructions.

1. How do you do the Dragon Punch?

2. How do you do Guile's Sonic Boom?

3. How do you do Honda's Sumo Torpedo?

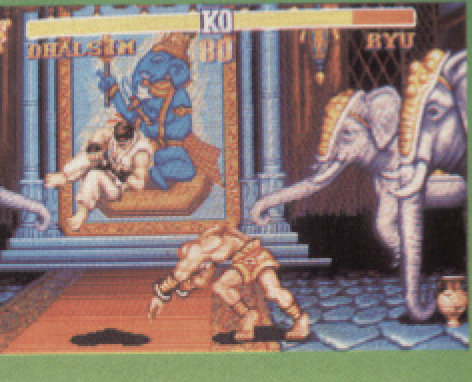
Lastly, my sister (aged 16) wants to know why everyone is so cruel to Rad because she fancies him something rotten!



Matthew Gell, Mickelover, Derbyshire

JAZ: Contrary to what it has said in other, lesser console magazines, a dragon punch is done right, down, right and then punch (if you're facing right). The sonic boom and torpedo are both done by a quick left, right, punch movement (facing right).

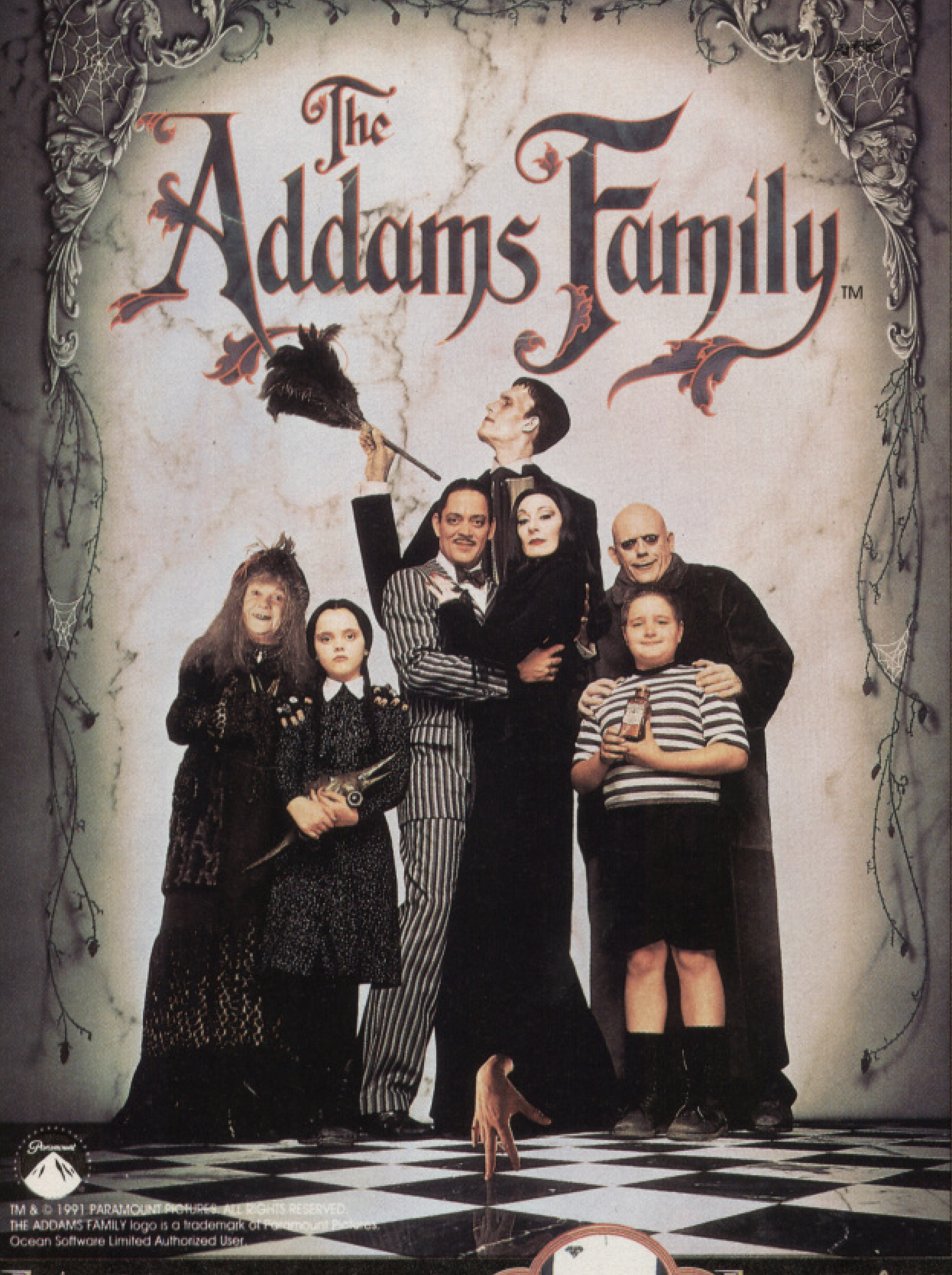








Creepy, Kooky, Ooky, Spooky!





They've got the creepiest house in town!

But not now that they've been evicted! Morticia, Lurch, Granny, Pugsley and Wednesday have gone back to their creepy abode to regain possession.



But watch out for Tully - he plays mean. Tully is the trecherous lawyer intent on stealing the family fortune and who has many a dirty trick up his sleeve.



But not now that they've disappeared! As Gomez you must find your loopy loved ones in their spooky mansion house.



And you'll be shakin', rattlin' and rollin' when the spikes, monsters and ghosts save the last one for you! If you solve the puzzles and follow the clues you might just save the Addams Family so that they can...

Haunt like a good family should!





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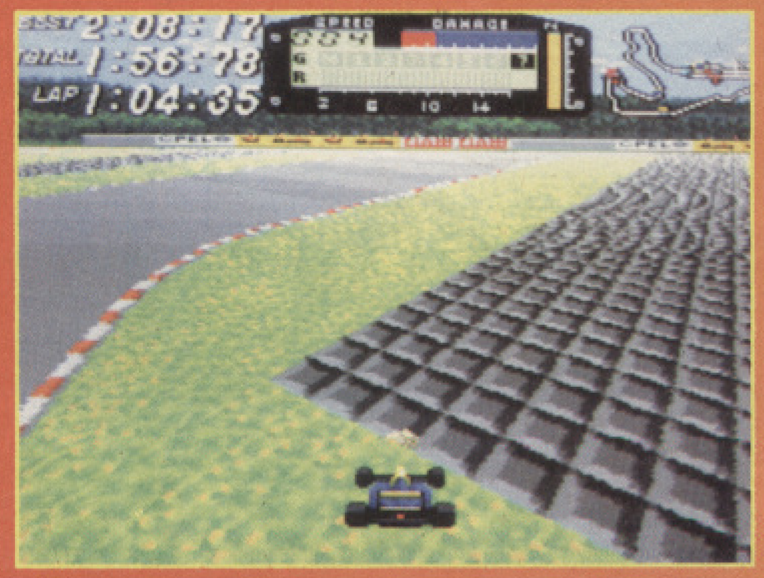
TIPS

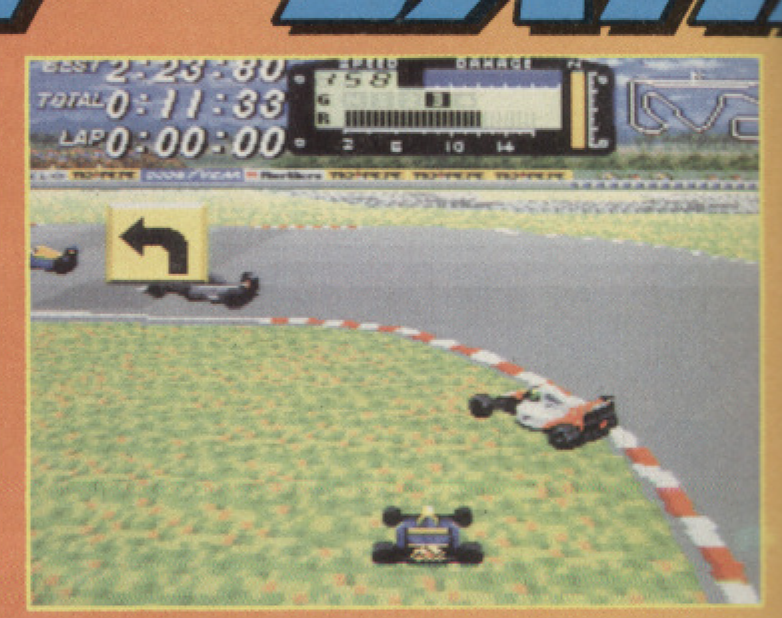
YES! Indeed! Here we are again with this month's collection of all the best from Console Tipdom. Examine the following pages for tons of interesting cheats 'n' tactics on all the top games! Groovy eh? Well, if you think that you can do better, send in only your very best tips to MEAN MACHINES TIPS, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Remember that we have £150.00 worth of top software waiting for your console - so get to it!

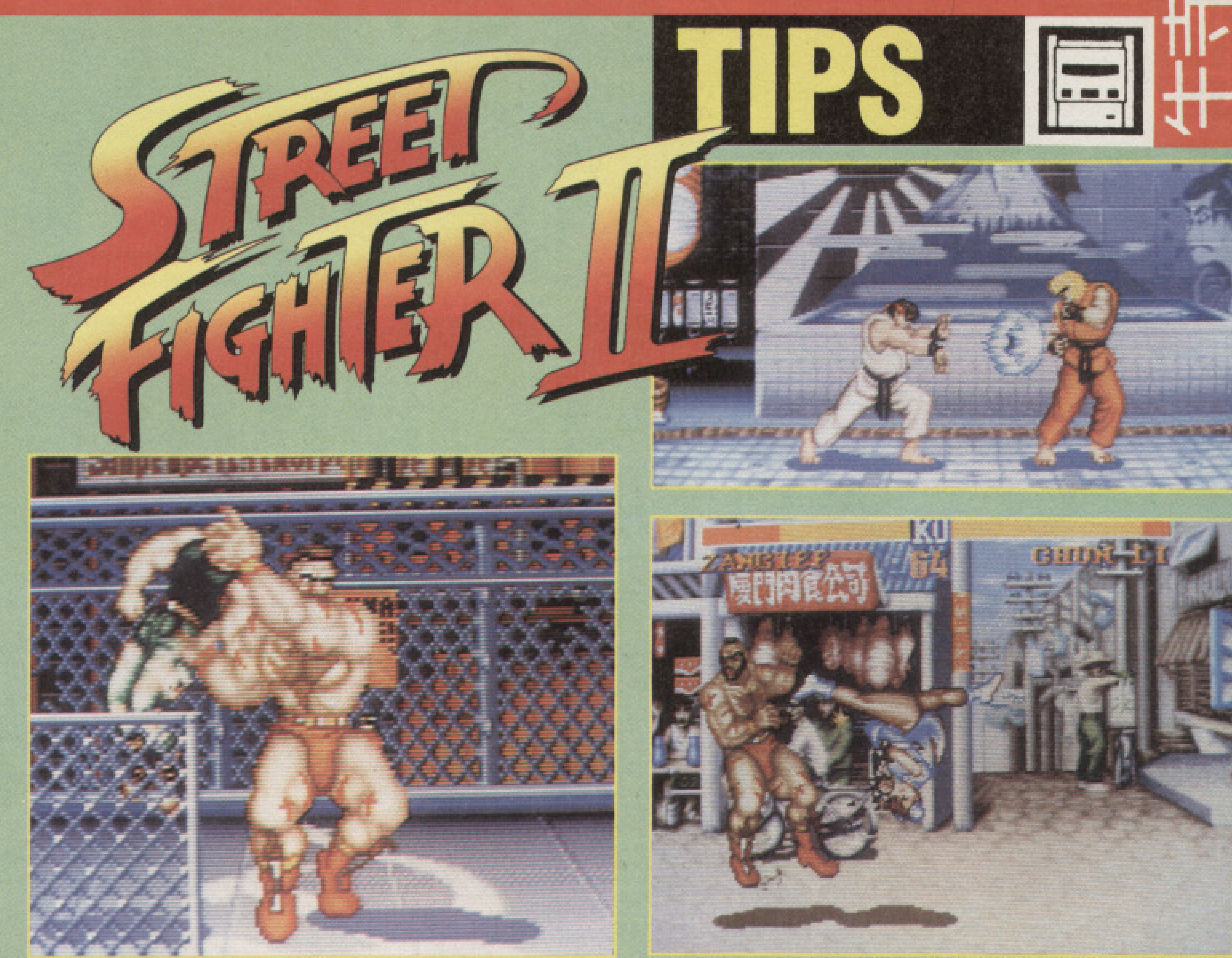
F1 EXH

According to Andy Chapman of Doncaster, there is a secret race track in this topper road racer. First of all, select the TEST or PRACTICE rounds and start to race as normal. Find a series of right-angle wall recesses adjacent to the track along the waterside section. This is in the lower left part of the track map. Hit the third right-angle along in the exact corner and do it as quickly as you can. You should break straight through and start travelling across water! Head SSW to find the hidden circuit!

Mr Chapman also sent in some top tips for people just starting their Grand Prix season! With your first winnings, buy extra grip for your F1 speedster. Then buy a large diffuser, high definition front and rear wings. Next, go for the top engine and better transmission. According to Andy, you can have the unbeatable Williams-esque car complete by the end of the first season - and that isn't bad.





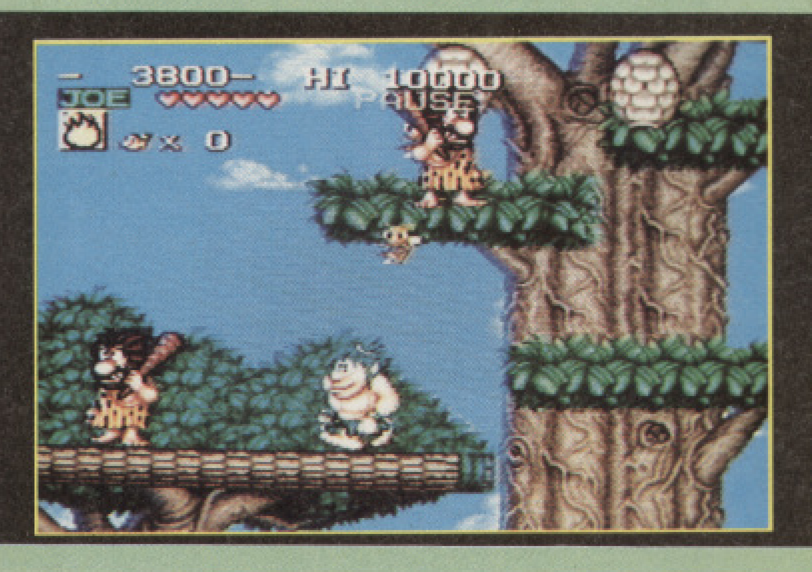


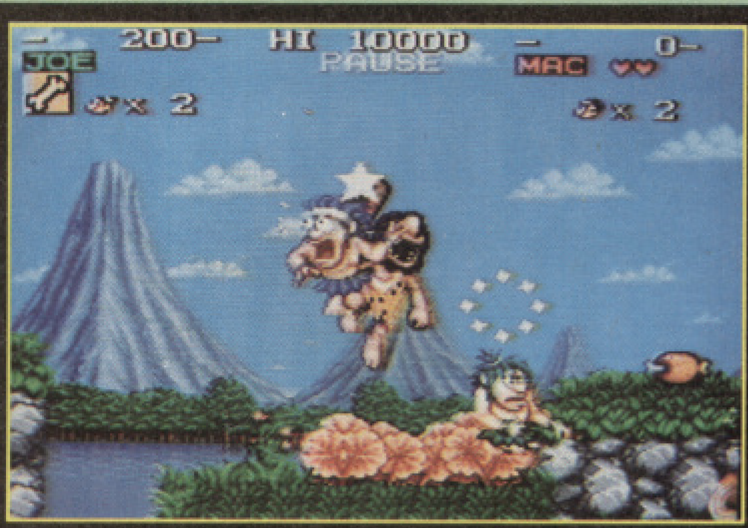
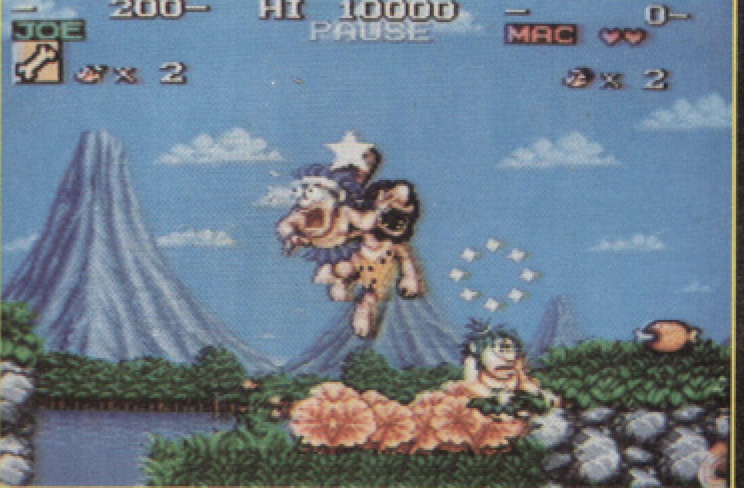
We've had an onslaught of Street Fighter II enquiries over the phone this month, most of which "revolve" around the Zangief's spinning piledriver attack - the deadliest move in the entire game.

Well, here's how to do it. Walk up to your opponent as Zangief and rotate the D-pad through 360 degrees! Now press the high-power punch button and you should successfully accomplish the move. It is very hard to learn, but it DOES work, so don't ring us up if you can't do it. We can't solve your lack of dexterity over the phone!

The second most popular call we get involves the end-game sequences. Some people have completed the game, but get no congratulations screen! Well, you MUST have your difficulty level set to at least 3 before you get the screens.

Sometime over the next few months, MEAN MACHINES is going to bring you the definitive Street Fighter II guide! Watch out for it, it's going to be mega!





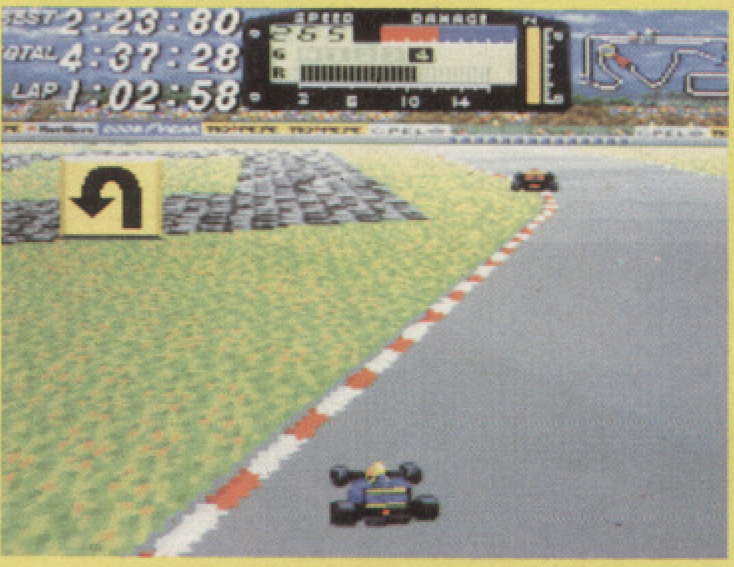
According to the man known as Steven Sharples from Preston, there are a couple of hidden levels in this decent coin-op conversion.

First of all, in level eight, there is a red egg in the middle of the stage. Kill all of the small dinosaurs before you crack the egg and you are flown to a special bonus stage where you can power-up your weapon. A key can also be collected, enabling you to get to the blue dots on the map. Also, you might like to know that in level nine, there is another of these strange red eggs. Crack this and you are taken to another bonus level. Coo!

Steven also has another tip for Joe and Mac. This enables you to get back into the end dinosaur if you die. When you die, you are asked to continue. Select YES and you are shown on the map in the last continue spot. Go to the last stage and when you are there pause the game and press SELECT. Hurrah!

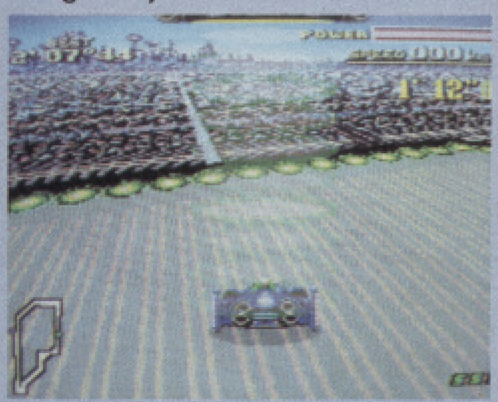






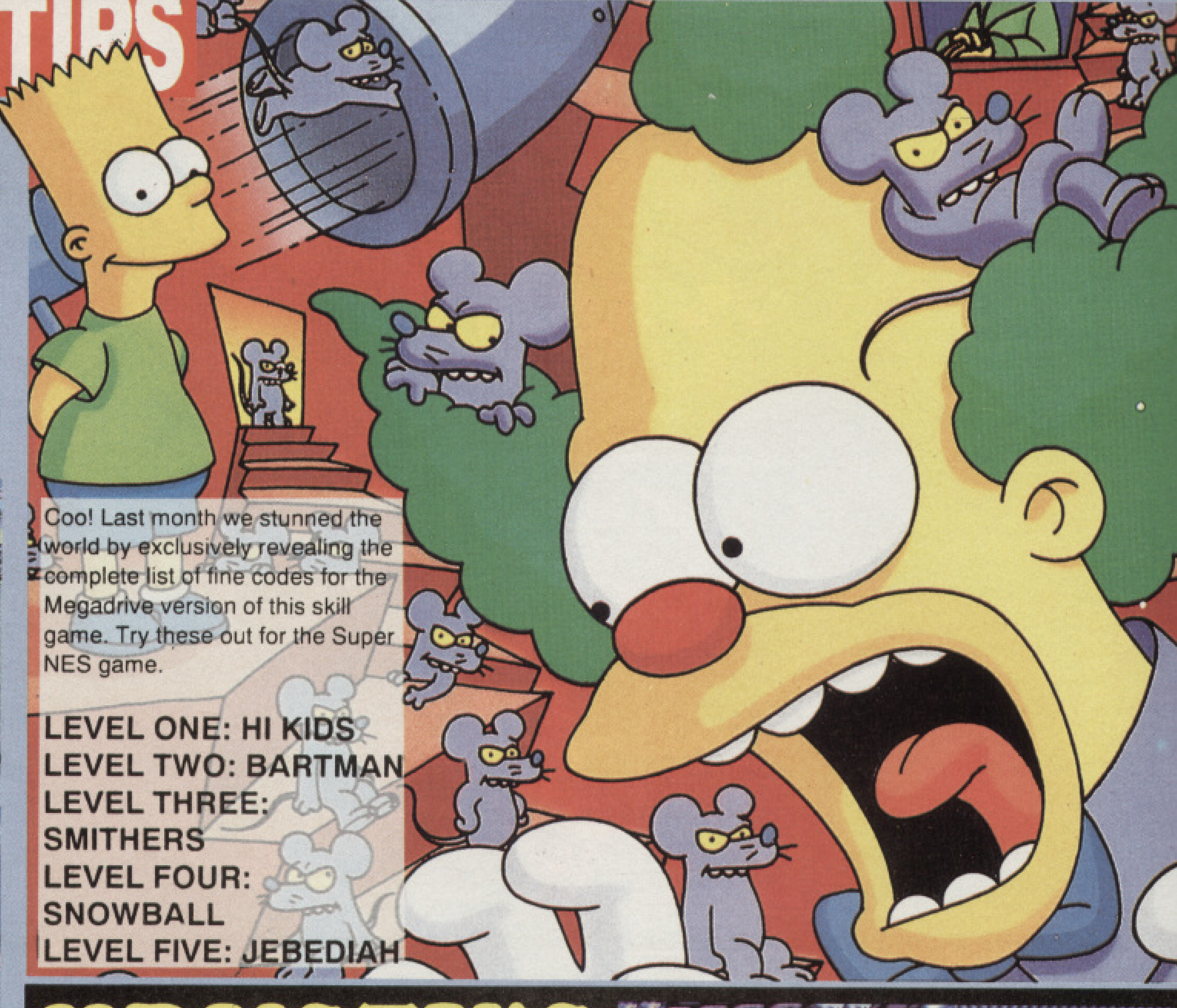
F-ZERO

There's an extra difficulty setting in this top road racer! Complete the King League on EXPERT level and the titles come up. Then a new MASTER difficulty setting appears. It's rock hard and only completely skillful players (like us) will get anywhere on it.





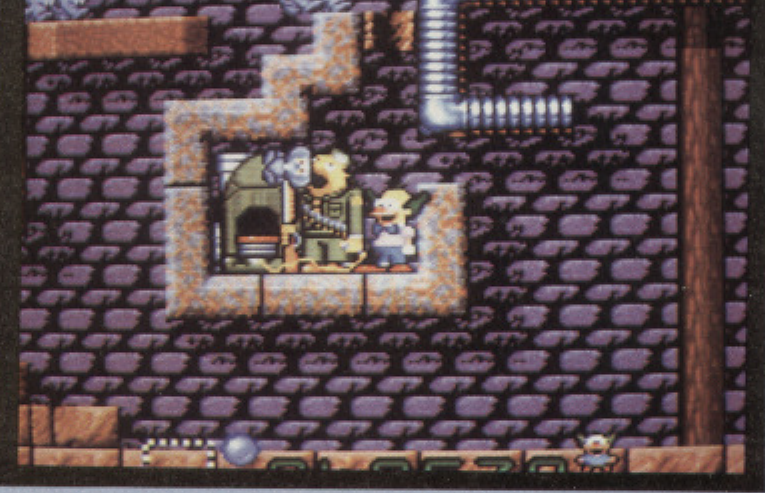




Coo! Last month we stunned the world by exclusively revealing the complete list of fine codes for the Megadrive version of this skill game. Try these out for the Super NES game.

LEVEL ONE: HI KIDS
LEVEL TWO: BARTMAN
LEVEL THREE: SMITHERS
LEVEL FOUR: SNOWBALL
LEVEL FIVE: JEBEDIAH

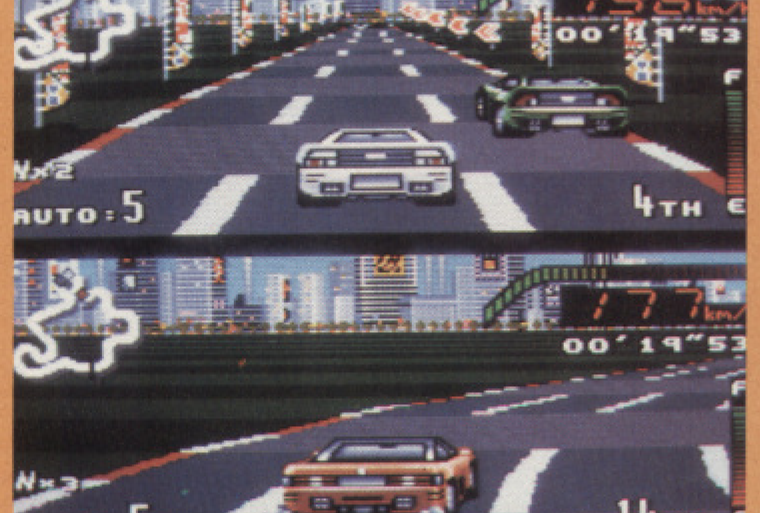
KRUSTY'S FUNHOUSE

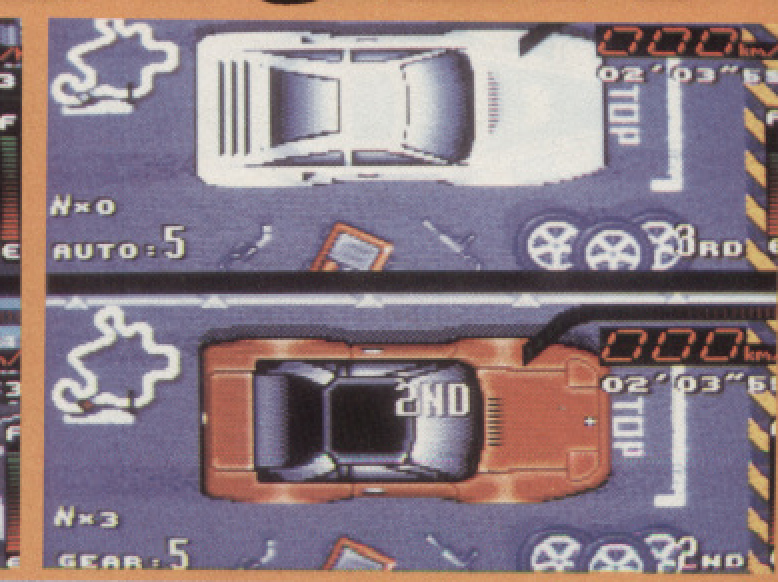


TOP RACER

Here's a cunning tip for this "top" racing game. It enables you to stand a far better chance of reaching the coveted number one position! All you have to do is select a two-player game, but DON'T have anyone controlling the second car! This stops the pretty good computer driver taking over, making it slightly easier to come first! Neat, huh?

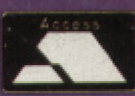
However, there is a downside to this activity. The absent player's car remains in the centre of the road near the starting line, making it very easy to smash into. However, if you dodge the car after the first lap, the other computer cars plow straight into it! Good one eh?





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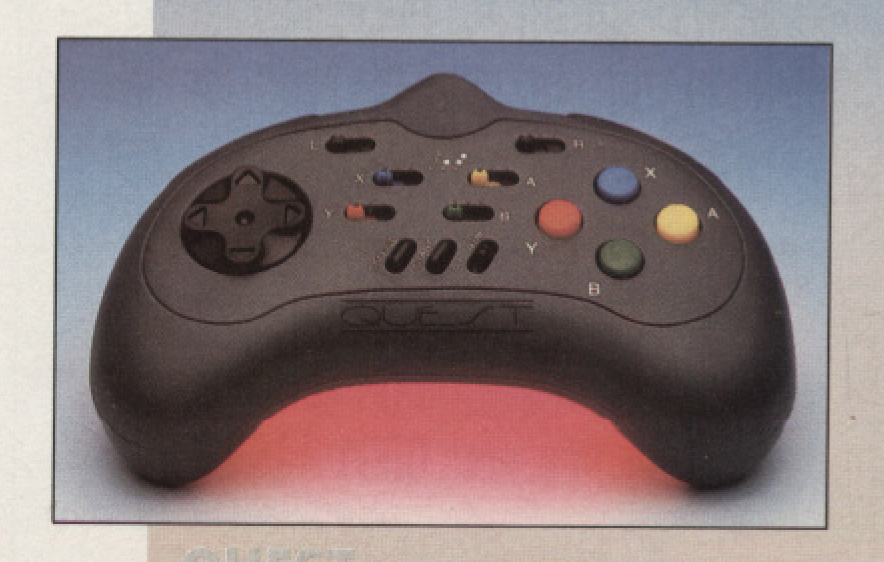
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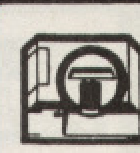
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TWO CRUDE DUDES

Well... what have we here? Could it be a great guide to Two Crude Dudes? Could be! These tips enable you to take on most of the meanies in the game! This is just half of Neil Craven's exhaustive (certainly exhausting to read - there are no full stops!) guide. More follows next month (if I don't lose his letter!).

PUNKS
Easy! Use a flying kick or throw them!

GREASE MONKEYS
Use a throw or flying kick. Remember though, if there's a lots of them, pick one up and chuck him at the rest!



HUNCHBACKS
These guys are dangerous. Use flying kicks on them, or throw them just after they have jumped. Remember that if they get you, you must hit all the buttons in rapid succession to shake them off.

ARMOUR DILLO
Use any weapon you have and stand on the centre platform. Wait for him to slow down then drop down, pick him up and throw him! Repeat the process.



PYROMANIAC
Use flying kicks and move away from this guys after each to avoid being toasted. If he fires at the ground, move up or down to another level and continue the attack when the fires runs out.

DISC CUTTER
EEEASSSYYY! Duck down until he has fired his disc, then roll over to him and throw him before the disc returns.

RABID HOUNDS
Use flying kicks and if one gets to you, again press all buttons.





COMMANDERS
Use flying kicks and avoid them if they are on a wall. Wait until they are down again to attack. If you're in two-player mode, it's a good idea to pick up your partner, jump high and throw him!

MAD BOMBER
Watch out for the bombs these guys throw. The easiest way to kill them is to jump over the bombs and then throw them.

HAND SNIPER
Just flying kick him as he approaches, then repeat the move as he stops flickering - indicating he's vulnerable to attack. Jump again if he raises his arm.

CYBORG D
Use flying kicks on him when this dude is in his human form. DON'T use the pole until he is in his cyborg form. Stay on the higher platforms and hit with the pole and this guy is history!

CYBORG D2
Use flying kicks until the human transforms into his robot form. Make sure you perfect the technique of rolling when the machine attacks. Don't pick him up, or it's curtains! Roll towards him, punch and roll back. Repeat that process.

SANTA CLAUS!
Keep the pole until he appears, then just hit him with it! If you've lost the pole, jump over the bombs and use flying kicks on him. Then wait until he's thrown another bomb. Jump over the bombs, kick him and keep repeating this procedure until he's kicked the bucket.

BLACK GILL
Use a flying kick. When he slides, jump over him and then throw him! Easy!

ASTE

It's one of the best Master System games reviewed of late! Asterix got a great review in MEAN MACHINES and ranks as another topper platform game up there with the likes of Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse! Matthew Burton, a keen Asterix player, has sent in the complete solution! Cor!

LEVEL 1-1, LEVEL 1-2
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

The first two levels are painfully easy and require no real skill. However, there are secret rooms on both levels and these are accessed by knocking the brickwork off the well and climbing inside. The first boss is easily defeated by jumping on him three times. The next boss is simpler still. Just stand between the holes in the floor and hit the three men that jump out.

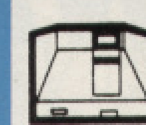
LEVEL 2-1
CHARACTER: OBELIX

Choose Obelix for this level. When you come to the pools of water, throw in a rock and jump on that. Now you can smash the obstructing bricks and progress! There are also two secret rooms packed with goodies to find. A hole in the ground near the first pool leads to the first. The other is through a hidden passage in the underwater cavern in the bottom of the right-hand hall. To kill the boss, run from the left side of the screen and jump on his head then stay in the bottom right to avoid the bees. Every time he jumps to the right, punch him. He dies after three hits.



LEVEL 2-2
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

This level is a real race against time! You need to use an explosion potion to smash the rocks and thus complete the level.





ERIX

LEVEL 2-3
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

When you get inside the building use the green potion to make platforms on the lava so you can walk across. When you get to the top of the building, you can jump off the left side of the roof if you want to find a secret room, or carry on off the right side to complete the level.

LEVEL 3-1
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

Dodge the snowballs and kill the snowmen and when you have dodged the second lot of snowballs, an extra life appears a few steps away. Jump to it, as there's an invisible hole in the way! Then fall down the hole, move left and the wave carries you to the exit.

LEVEL 3-2
CHARACTER: OBELIX

Jump onto the ice cubes, dodge the birds and kill the snowmen, but watch out because the ice is slippery. When you go through the exit, you have to find the fire potion which is hidden in a pot to the far right to melt the ice. Continue and you should come to two pots. Hit the first pot to get some bonuses. The key is in the second.

LEVEL 3-3
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

You are now inside a building. You have to work your way through using the moving platforms until you get to a door. When through the door slide under the small gap to the right and then go through the next door after you've completed a potion to the right. You will soon come to another small gap. Slide through this for an extra life. The boss jumps from left to right and causes snowballs to fall. Stay to the right side then jump on his head.

LEVEL 4-1
CHARACTER: OBELIX

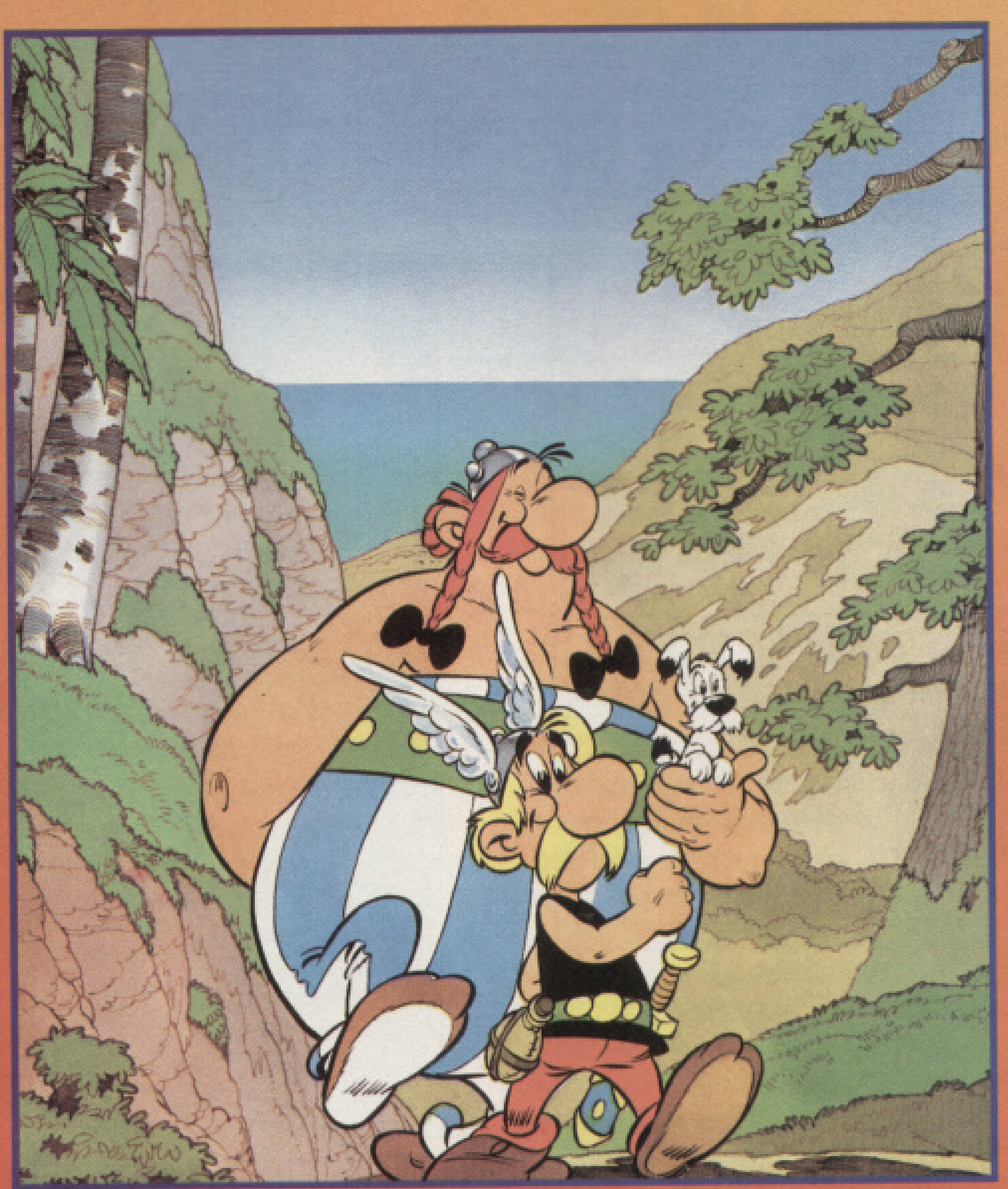
To find the key, enter the secret room via the first blue pot. When you come out, sink in the mud and you enter a room which takes you to the exit. By the way, there is an extra life by the door in the mud.

LEVEL 4-2
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

On this level there are some huge cannons on the floor. Get inside one and drop an explosive potion to shoot yourself off. The vertical cannon fires you to the key in the cloud, making it simplicity itself to complete the level.

LEVEL 4-3
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

Slide under the gap and into the pot. Now if you jump on one of the stones, the other lifts, so jump on the flat one then onto the other and then jump on top of the scenery to find several secret rooms. When you come to a wall with a moving platform in front, throw potions and they demolish the wall (don't stand on the platform or it collapses). Then dodge the falling rocks and when you reach the top, go left and fight the boss.







LEVEL 5-1
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

Go to the far right and jump up to the door on the roof and collect the explosive potion, then go underground. When you emerge, you are springboarded to the roof. Kill the bird and collect the key and then find the door.

LEVEL 5-2
CHARACTER: OBELIX

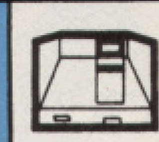
Use the bubbles to cross the spikes then go underground. First go left to collect a potion so you can cross the harmful mud, then go right and use the potion to collect the key. Spring back out of the cave and go left to find the exit.

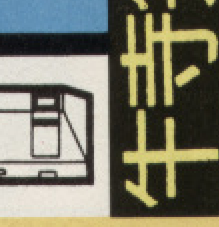
LEVEL 5-3
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

Dodge the falling walls and weights and when you come to the one-way doors, let the weights fall and move them, then dodge the guillotines. In the next room jump from platform to platform taking care to miss the spiders in their webs.

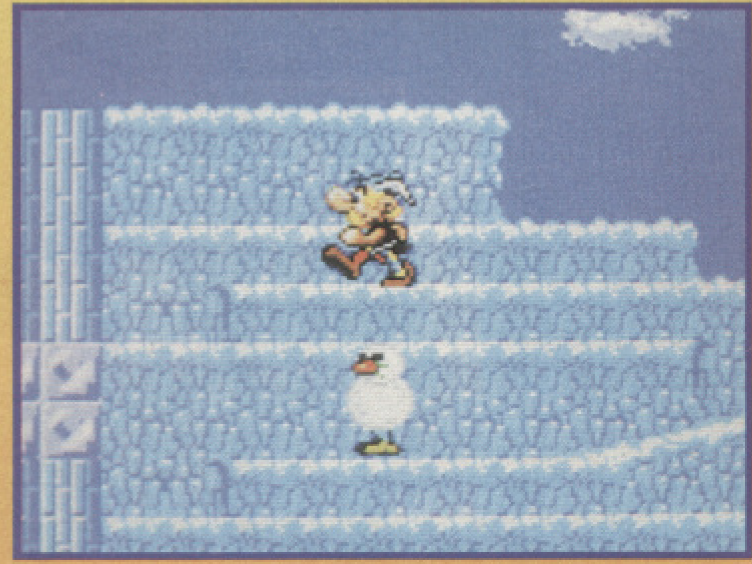
LEVEL 6-1
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

Swim between the stars until you come to the pink monster, which sucks you inside! Walk through the inside of the monster and then use a potion to open the door. When you come out, swim to the top of the screen and out of the water to collect the key. Keep moving right and at the end throw a potion into the water. Stand on the resulting platform and jump over to the right to find another secret room!











LEVEL 6-2
CHARACTER: OBELIX

Climb up the ship using the anchor and then grab hold of the pole the bird is carrying (after you've gone to the left and collected a life). Dodge the obstacles and jump to the right when the bird falls away onto a spring which takes you to a secret room to the right. Find a green potion, then use it to make platforms on the water. Walk across using this bridge to make it across.

LEVEL 6-3
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

In the first room keep running and jump to get to the top of the screen before the ever-rising lava catches up with you. In the next room, move the pad LEFT when the log is at the bottom and RIGHT at the top to dodge the spikes. Jump off when you see a pot because this is the key, then jump back on.

LEVEL 7-1
CHARACTER: OBELIX

The whirlwind takes you underground. Kill the fire jugglers with potions but watch out, because it's slippery. When you come out, punch the brick to let the water come out. The cactus grows and you can jump left to collect the key. The door is to the right.

LEVEL 7-2
CHARACTER: OBELIX

After you jump past the fire-spitting sphinx climb inside the wall and jump past the mummies and go down the last well, collecting the key from the left pot. However, there is no way out, so commit suicide! Then repeat this level solution, but jump through the hole in the ceiling where you knocked the bricks away to get to the door.



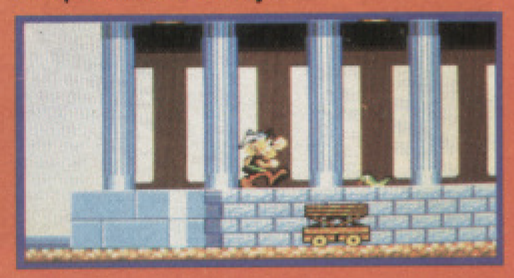
LEVEL 7-3
CHARACTER: OBELIX

The first room is very hard. You have to jump onto the first platform, do a small jump onto the next and two big jump to reach the side. Jump past the cogs. In the next room you have to follow a platform all the way up to the top, just like in level 3-3. In the next room, jump on the first platform then a next is lowered, so leap atop the next and keep running along. On the other side, pick the middle door, collect the key and exit.



LEVEL 8-1
CHARACTER: ASTERIX

The last level! You're prancing through the streets of Rome on a horse. Jump to avoid the spears on the floor and duck to dodge the spears above. This is all pretty easy, so it shouldn't be long before you're watching the end-game sequence. Hooray!



KID CHAMELEON

Kid Chameleon is a massive platform game, boasting loads of levels full of danger and excitement. Although for the most part it is quite an easy game, you may have problems with certain levels. These tips, supplied by someone who didn't attach their name to their tips (doh!), should help you through. The guide also helps you locate some of the many secret rooms and warps in the game.



SPECIAL WARPS

SKIP FIRST TWO LEVELS: Finish Blue Lake Woods I in twenty seconds or less, but leave every prize behind, and don't even get hit by anything! Now finish High Water Pass in less than 60 seconds and High Water Pass II in less than 27 seconds. Take the teleporter to skip the rest of the levels.

WARP TO BLACK PERIL III: Find the Cyclone Helmet in one of the structures above and take the teleporter to Under Skull Mountain I. Here you'll find a room under the inclines on the right hand side. Only using th Cyclone Helmet can you fly into this bonus room and get all of the blocks giving you 10,000 points. If your score is above 100,000 a warp appears that takes you to Black Peril III.



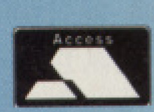




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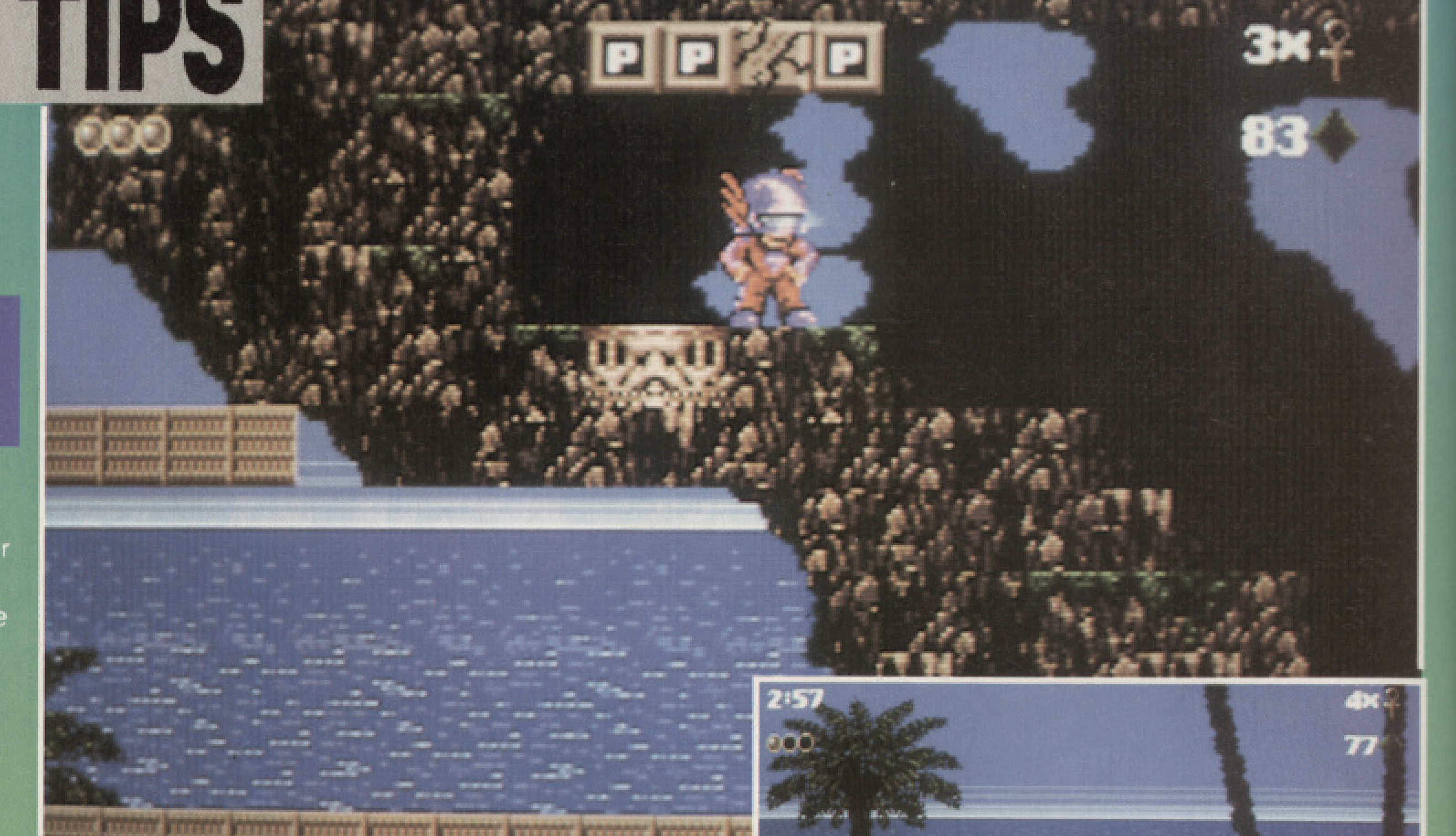
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TWO MORE HIDDEN WARPS: Check out these levels for some hidden transporters: Isle of the Lion Lord and Hoverboard Beach.

ENEMY PATTERNS

Every alien has its own behaviour pattern. The only trick is to remember how each reacts to your movements and counter attack. Remember that many enemies are reset pretty quickly after you've disposed of them, so don't purposely backtrack or hang around too much. Some enemies can be pushed over ledges, but others hold firm. Find out how each alien acts.

MASK-A-TRON

There are many different masks in the game that transform Kid Chameleon, giving him with many different abilities. Here's the complete list, along with strengths and weaknesses where appropriate.



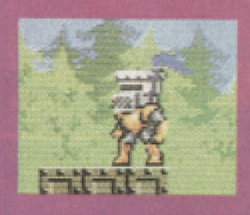
CHAOS MASK: Makes Kid very spikey, enabling him to charge through solid concrete walls.



SPACE HELMET: This alien artifact fires a highly powerful laser gun. Very good indeed, but extremely rare in the game.



SAMURAI HELMET: Endows Kid with Samurai powers and a massive chopper! The downward thrust is excellent, well worth getting the hang of.



ARMOUR HELMET: Very good for surveying the terrain. This mask gives Kid a better jump and allows him to climb walls - essential on some levels.



HOCKEY GUARD: This lets Kid throw axes and even boosts his jumping prowess. Very good against firing animals.

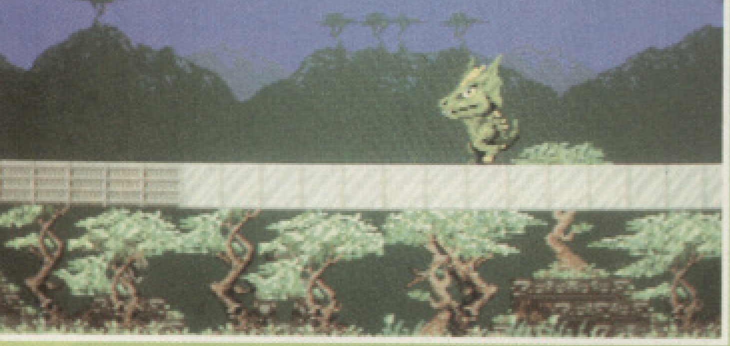
SUPER HELMET: Excellent! This helm endows Kid with super speed and gives him massive jumps that take out enemies in the process!

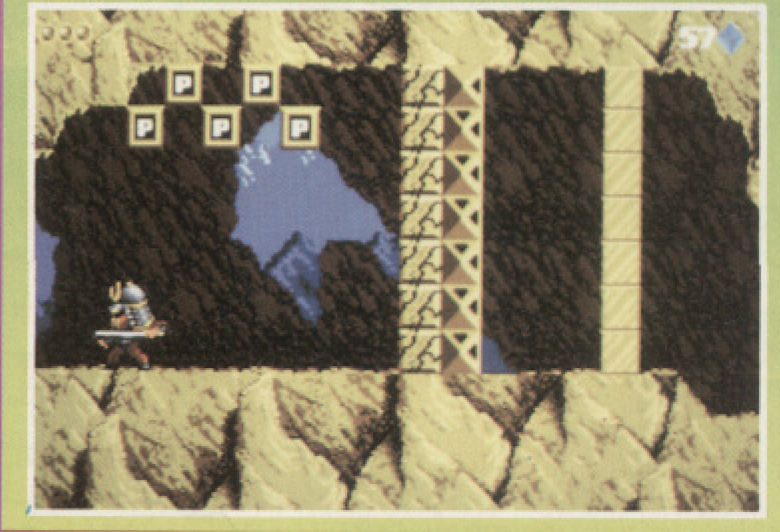


SUPER SKULL: This is pretty groovy. Kid is changed into a mini-tank that fires explosive skulls.

SKYCUTTER HELMET: Puts you on a skateboard. There's not much more to say about it, really.







DIFFICULT LEVELS

Here are some mini-tips that identify some of the nastier levels of the game. There are also some pointers that let you avoid the level.

WARRIOR PASS, THE PINNACLE: This level is ten screens high, entailing lots of climbing. Avoid the teleporter in Dragon Spike to get away from this.

BLACK PERIL, FORCED ENTRY: This one is another forced scroll effort - a real race against time. You can skip this difficult level by taking the teleport in The Woods of Despair II.

BLACK PERIL, BLOODY SWAMP: Another forced scrolling stage. Avoid this level by not taking the teleport in Blizzard Mountain.

CHAOS MAZE: This one is REALLY tough! The best tip is to try and locate a Space Helmet and put those diamonds to good use!



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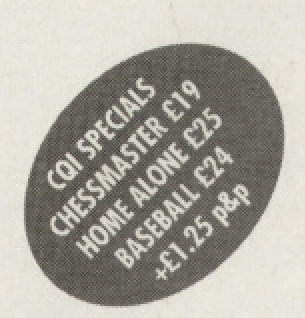
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TURTLES II THE ARCADE GAME

Here's a little cheat that Nintendo Turtles players could really benefit from. It lets you to start the game with TEN (yes, ten!) turtles and also opens up a level select! Thanks to John Smith from Macclesfield for this tip.

When the title screen pops up, press **B, A, B, A, UP, DOWN, B, A, LEFT, RIGHT**, and hold down **B, A,** and **START! You'll get your ten turtles and the level select should make itself known. Excellent.**



TOTALLY RAD

Thanks to Hornby, we've got hold of some great Game Genie codes for this new NES release. Remember that you can pick 'n' mix up to three of the codes listed below!

£SZSEYXVK - INFINITE LIVES
£AEUZKTZA - START WITH ONE LIFE
£IEUZKTZA - START WITH SIX LIVES
£AEUZKTZE - START WITH NINE LIVES
£SVVNTKON - LOSE NO ENERGY
£GXXAPKSN - INFINITE MAGIC
£AOOAYGAO - SUPER JUMP
£YOOAYGAO - MEGA JUMP!
£TEEONALA - HALF LIFE OR MAGIC GIVES FULL LIFE OR MAGIC
£SZVAYIVG - IMMUNE TO FIRE OR WATER





BULLS VS LAKERS

Saul Neighbour of Hitchin sent in loads of codes for this accomplished basketball simulation! Check this little lot out!

FIRST ROUND

71vbbcb3 = LAKERS 1-0 SUNS
71vbbbvt = LAKERS 2-0 SUNS
71vbbcv3 = LAKERS 3-0 SUNS
71zbbbbq = LAKERS 4-0 SUNS

NBA QUARTERFINALS

71zbbgbn = LAKERS 1-0 TRAILBLAZERS
71zbbdbd = LAKERS 2-0 TRAILBLAZERS
71zbbjbj = LAKERS 3-0 TRAILBLAZERS
71xbbbbm = LAKERS 4-0 TRAILBLAZERS

NBA SEMIFINALS

71xbbvbl = LAKERS 1-0 JAZZ
71xbblbn = LAKERS 2-0 JAZZ
71kbb2bp = LAKERS 3-0 JAZZ
71obbbbp = LAKERS 4-0 JAZZ

KID CHAMELEON

An individual known to the world as Dean Skinner from Rush Green near Romford (***which is where I was born, fact fans - Rich***) sent in this little cheat for the wild 'n' wacky platform game.

On Blue Lakes Woods II (the second level), go to the end of the level and instead of touching the flag as normal, jump onto the prize block above. Now press these in quick succession: UP, DOWN, A, B and C all at the same time. You should be beamed to the last boss!





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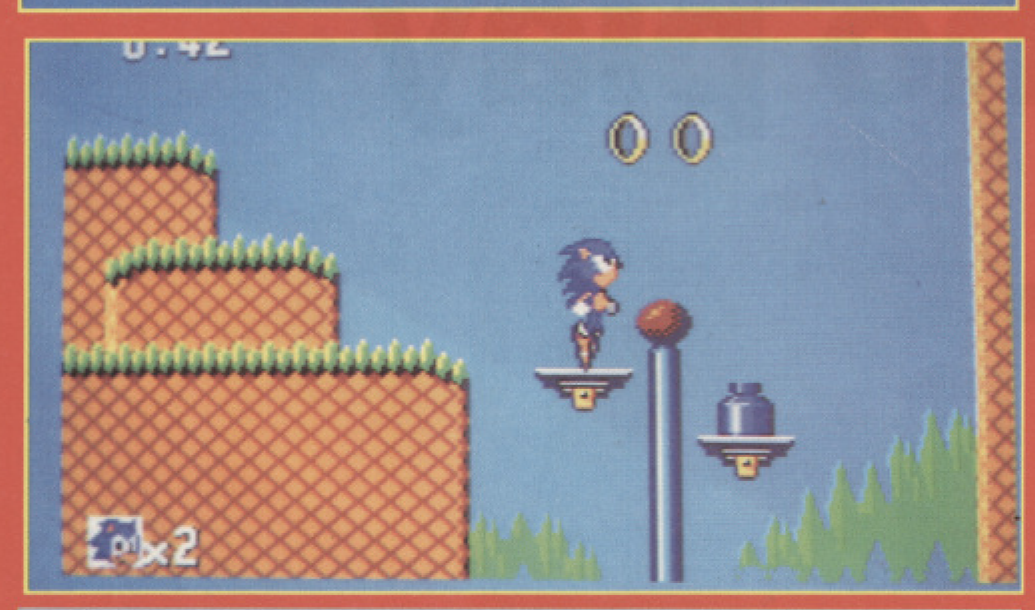
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PIPEDREAM

Wow! Here's a complete list o' codes for that veritable brain teaser, Pipedream! Many thanks go to Clinton Rimmer of Marks Tey, Colchester for these tips.

LEVEL 5: HAHA
LEVEL 9: GRIN
LEVEL 13: REAP
LEVEL 17: SEED
LEVEL 21: GROW
LEVEL 25: TALL
LEVEL 29: YALI

GODZILLA

Excitement! Plenty of codes for this digitised interpretation of the notorious rubber monster's amazing exploits! Who have we to thank for all these codes? A certain Robert Davis of Bedford, that's who.

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?KGQ

BATTLETOADS

Here's an interesting little tip of the extra lives variety. To start the game with FIVE extra lives, on the title screen hold down A, B and DOWN. Then press START. You should now start the game as normal but with a quintet of extra lives for your disposal.

BEETLEJUICE

Here's an interesting tip from Oliver Rice of Hedge End. On the second to top platform, stand as close to the block (next to the ladder) as you possibly can and press UP and A together until you are eventually on the roof. Now you can skip level two. Amazing! Sort of...

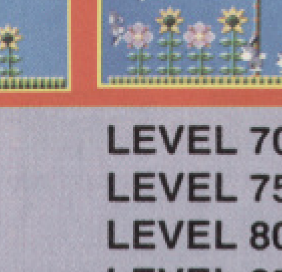
SNOW BROS JR

"I've got loads of cheats for different consoles," writes Steven Sharples of Preston. Among them are a couple of sterling tips for Snow Bros Jr!

To become invincible on this "cool" game (that's Steven's joke, not mine), press and hold down LEFT, DOWN, A and B and then press START.

To get hold of a topper map select, on the title screen hold down UP, SELECT, B and START. And there you have it! "Cool" eh?





SLIDER

Wow! Davinia Thompson from Catford has been quite busy of late with the game Slider! Check out this list of passwords! A complete list was sent to us, but we just haven't the room to print them all... oh well!

LEVEL 10: ACAC
LEVEL 15: JCJE
LEVEL 20: AAEE
LEVEL 25: JAPI
LEVEL 30: ACGG
LEVEL 35: JCPK
LEVEL 40: AEAE
LEVEL 45: JELI
LEVEL 50: AGAG
LEVEL 55: JGLK
LEVEL 60: AEEI
LEVEL 65: JEPM
LEVEL 70: APED
LEVEL 75: JGPO
LEVEL 80: EAAE
LEVEL 85: NALI
LEVEL 90: ECAG
LEVEL 95: NCLK
LEVEL 99: PCJK

There are people who play games.



Then there are people who play Nintendo.



FINAL FIGHT



SUPER CASTLEVANIA IV



THE ADDAMS FAMILY





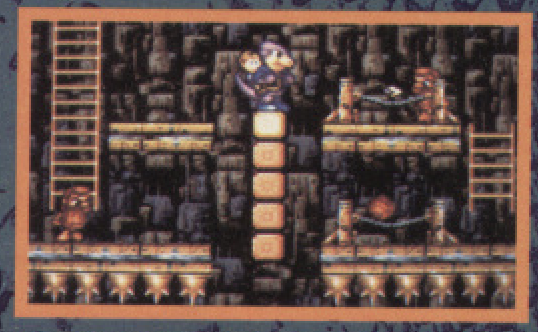
Will you ever reach the end?

DINOSAURS

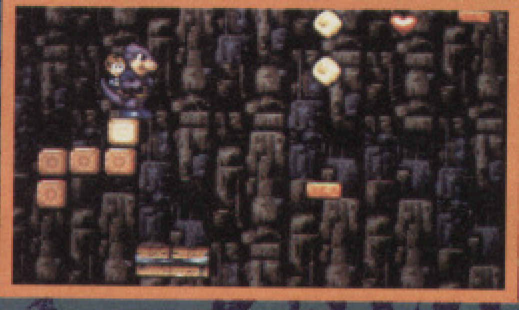
Kids eh? Leave them alone for five minutes with your experimental time machine and they get up to all sorts of no good. For instance, Tim and Penny, nephew and niece of a chronology-warping scientist have stolen their uncle's pride and joy and taken it for a spin back to the dawn of time. Sadly, the pair were separated from their transport during its touchdown in pre-Stone Age times, and the priceless machine fell into the hands of the nefarious Mr Big, dinosaur ancestor of today's crime bosses.

Luckily for the twins, they landed in a particularly hospitable area of swamp land, where they quickly befriended two dinosaurs. Wishing to rid the land of Mr Big and reclaim the powerful time machine, they join forces and head towards Mr Big's hideout, far across the platform landscape of Prehistory.

However, should our chums take too long in their quest, their prize foe will have his chance to take over the world with the aid of his new-found toy.



▲ *Ride the platform to terror.*



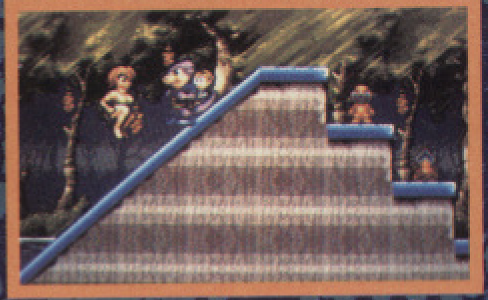
▲ *It's that twisty platform again.*

MOUNTING DINO SORES

Each of the two meddling kids have chosen their personal favourite dino to ride. Young Tim has selected Rex, a small Tyrannosaurus, whilst his sister has plumped for Tops, a mini Triceratops. Although each of the dinosaurs are equal in most abilities, speed, jumping ability and so on, when it comes to combat techniques there is a marked difference. Both dinosaurs can jump on the heads of enemies to kill them, but each have their own special technique too. Rex is quite content to use his powerful punch on anything that moves, but Tops has perfected the technique of firing arrows at his enemies, causing the same amount of damage as Rex but from a longer distance. No prizes for guessing which dinosaur is the most popular, but as Dinosaurs is an alternating two-player game, at least the second player can pick the same dinosaur.

DOUBLE DOOR DEALINGS

At the end of most levels are two doors, each leading to a different level. One door is generally harder to reach than the other. However this does not, as you might expect, mean it leads to an easier level, as all the same levels must be completed anyway, the doors only make a difference as to in which order they are tackled. The harder to reach doors do, however, often lead to bonus levels. Here, a scrolling landscape of one sort or another is presented loaded with goodies, and it is up to the player to collect as many of these as he is able in the time allotted. But it's not as easy as just running about - often there is a pattern to the appearance of the bonuses so a rhythm needs building up in order to scoop the lot.



▲ *Attack of the moles and beavers.*



▲ *Beware the wall-pushing caveman.*



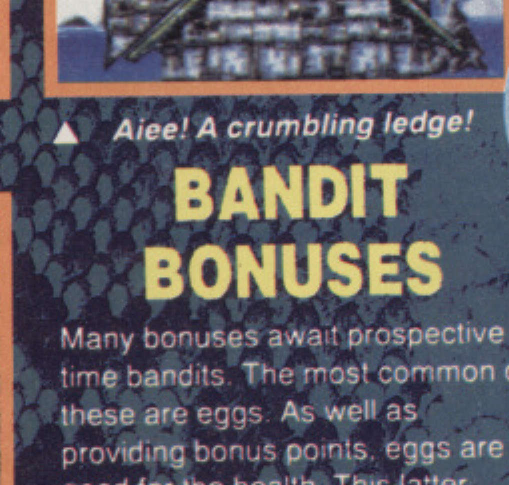
▲ *Shoot! Shoot! Kill them all! Kill!*



▲ *Fly, fly you fools...*



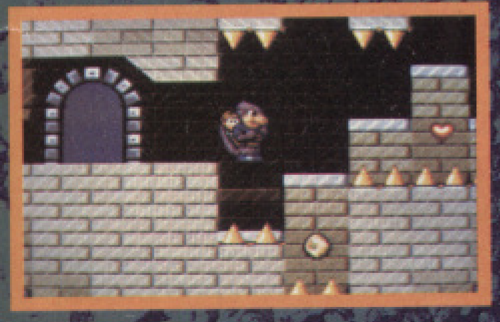
▲ *A narrow escape from the rock of doom.*



▲ *Aiee! A crumbling ledge!*

GET ORF MY DINO

Although riding dinosaurs saves a lot of leg work and is great for impressing the natives, there are times when a lumbering hulk of lizard is just not manoeuverable enough for your needs. Fortunately, pressing the R button causes your chosen youth to alight from his transport, who then sits patiently waiting for his return. During this state of separation the dinosaurs are invulnerable to most attacks, although falling off the bottom of the screen results in certain death. The twins though are open to damage, although they can fight back with their freeze rays, which petrify enemies for a short period of time allowing the plucky young'uns to make good their escape or jump on the heads of their foes, thus disposing of them.

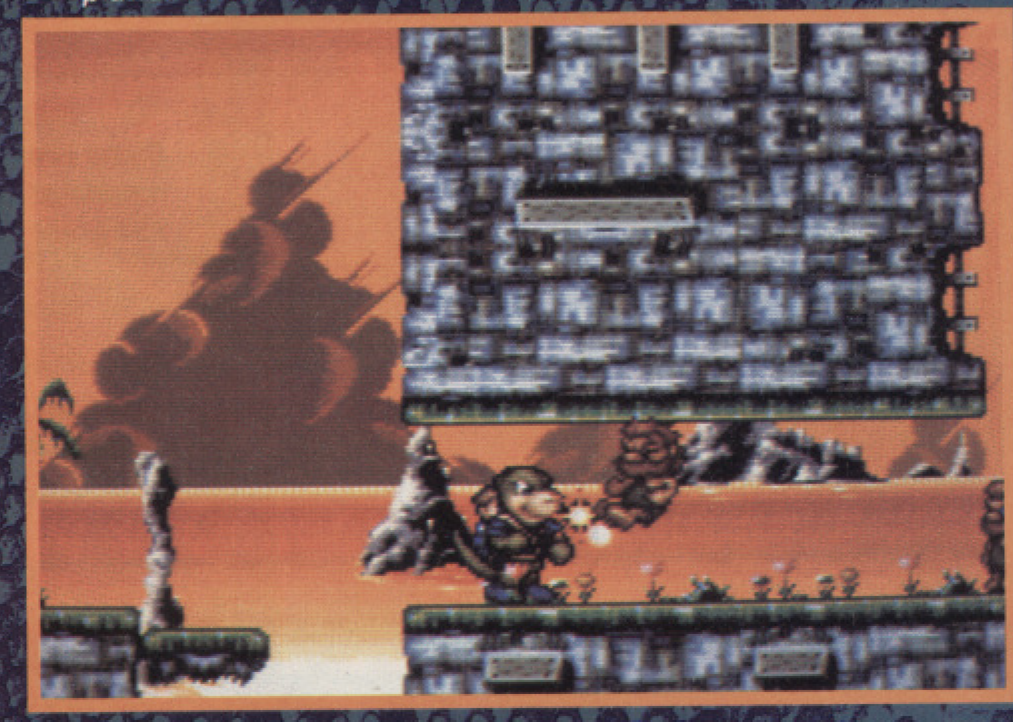




▲ *The ultra-rock flying platforms level.*

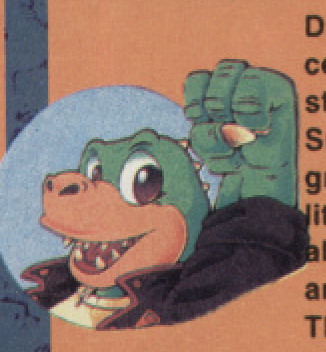
BANDIT BONUSES

Many bonuses await prospective time bandits. The most common of these are eggs. As well as providing bonus points, eggs are good for the health. This latter point is illustrated by the granting of an extra life every time fifty eggs are collected! Other longevity-inducing gifts scattered around the landscape include energy-replenishing hearts and numerous extra lives.



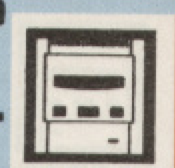
▲ *Rex's devastating punch sees off Johnny Caveman, the cad.*

COMMENT



RAD

Dinosaurs certainly is a strange game. Sure, the graphics are a little odd-ball, although they are excellent. The still screen shots look good enough, but things are even better in motion. What's really strange about the game is its design. On the one hand, the game is packed with innovative and original features with stacks of challenging puzzles and feats of manual dexterity to make life tough on you. On the other hand, there is an extra life dished out on pretty much every level, so it's a long time before you have to use any of the unlimited credits at your disposal, as if Irem want you to complete the game overnight. Dinosaurs is very original, which is rare enough thing at the moment, and it is indeed very playable, except for some atrocious slowdown problems. But the trouble is unless you've got extraordinary willpower (it's way too easy to continue) and can resist the added temptation of the password system, Dinosaurs won't last you more than a weekend. For this reason, and its undoubted graphical appeal, Dinosaurs is really one for the younger players.

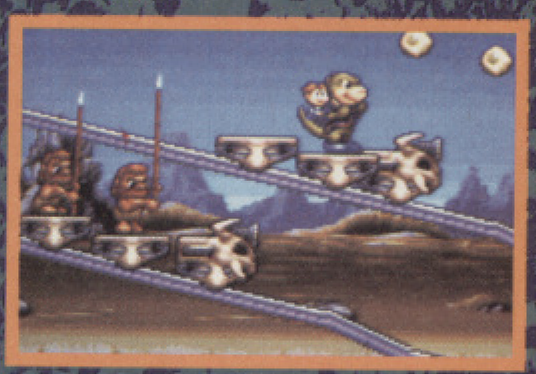




▲ These interlocking walls scroll back and forth, crushing any dino trapped between the halves.



▲ Mind the giant earthworms, Marlon!



▲ The groovy rollercoaster of death.

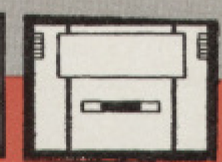


BY: IREM

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE DATE: IMPORT
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: OKAY

1-2 PLAYERS







▲ Fairground trivolity abounds here.



▲ Beware the netballing neanderthals.

COMMENT

JULIAN

How crap do Irem think us players are? Not only does Dinosaurs feature unlimited continues, but extra lives are given virtually every level AND there's a password system too! The upshot of this is that it's virtually impossible not to crack the entire game within a few hours. Doh! It's a shame, really, because Dinosaurs is packed full of neat ideas and features some great screens. Okay, so the game slows down occasionally, but it doesn't mar the fun and enjoyment. What does do that is the lack of challenge. It's all over before you know it. Without all the player help and with a little more challenge, Dinosaurs could have been brill. As it is, only beginners and children will get anything out of it.

NOT JUST PLATFORMS

Dinosaurs is more than a standard platform game. Often, the structure of the levels varies from the usual platform format. Certain levels, for instance, are set on a ferris wheel spinning through the sky, with only eight small revolving platforms between you and certain death. Other levels negotiate river stretches on jetskis or even on the head of a Diplodocus. Some of the most entertaining levels however are those set on a nightmare roller-coaster ride, where careful leaping from train to train is the key to survival.



▲ An action-packed scene representative of the excitement to be found in Dinosaurs.

PRESENTATION 92%

Stuffed full of options and presentation sequences.

GRAPHICS 93%

Cute, detailed and colourful sprites, some stunning backdrops and pretty good animation.

SOUND 81%

Decent enough tunes and no shortage of effects to feed the ears.

PLAYABILITY 89%

Some pretty bad slowdown probs on a couple of levels mar things a little, but it's still great fun.

LASTABILITY 58%

The unlimited continues and zillions of extra lives AND a password system means this is a doddle to complete.

OVERALL 78%

An innovative addition to the ever-growing SNES platform range, but don't expect it to keep you challenged.

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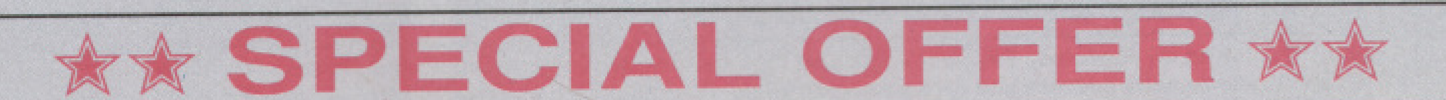
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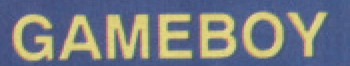
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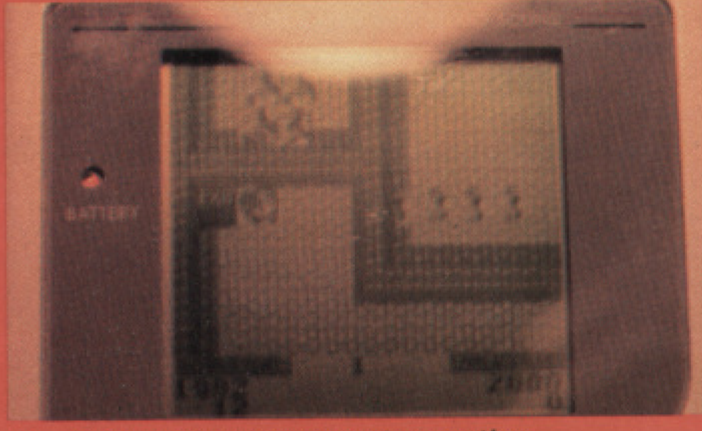
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TOP 10 CHARTS

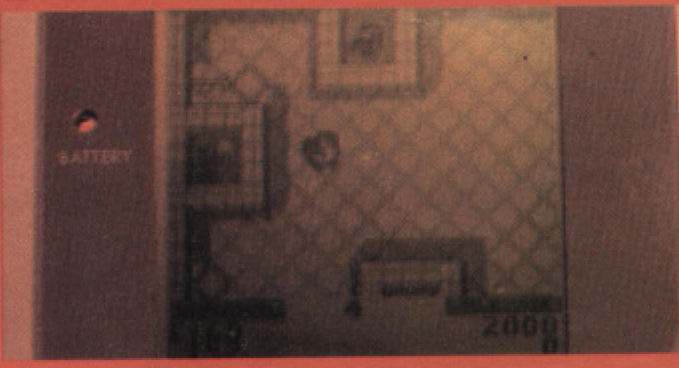


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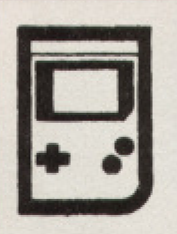
Isn't it funny how the oldest game in the Gameboy chart also happens to be the cart at the number one slot? Yes indeed - Super Marioland still rules the roost. Choplifter II makes a welcome charge for the top slot, with Adventure Island and Hook rallying for that same position.



▲ *Some Gauntlet Gameboy action.*



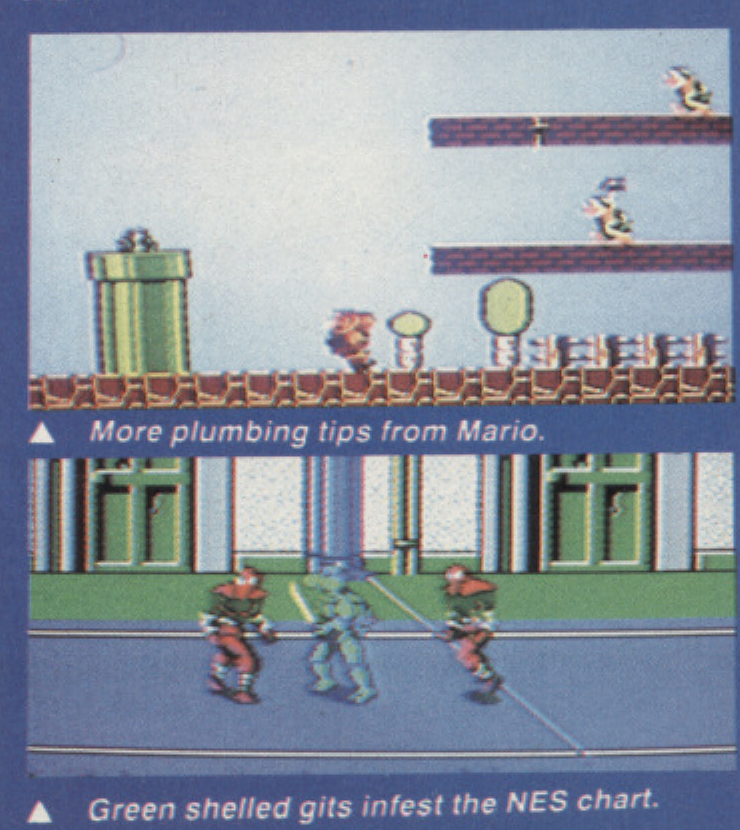
▲ *And some more!*



GAMEBOY

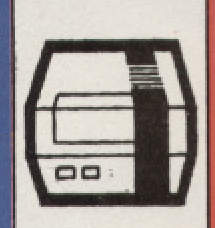
1	◀	SUPER MARIO LAND
2	▲	CHOPLIFTER II
3	▼	DUCK TALES
4	▲	GAUNTLET II
5	NE	ADVENTURE ISLAND
6	NE	HOOK
7	NE	TURTLES
8	◀	SIMPSONS
9	◀	DR MARIO
10	NE	TRAX

After ages at the top of the chart last year those pesky Turtles have somehow rematerialised in the top three, selling more copies than its sequel! Strange... Other than that, a rather pedestrian chart, with the top two games remaining static. A couple of new entries arrive, namely Hook and Adventure Island II. Wimbledon mania somehow gets the atrocious Four Player Tennis into the chart.



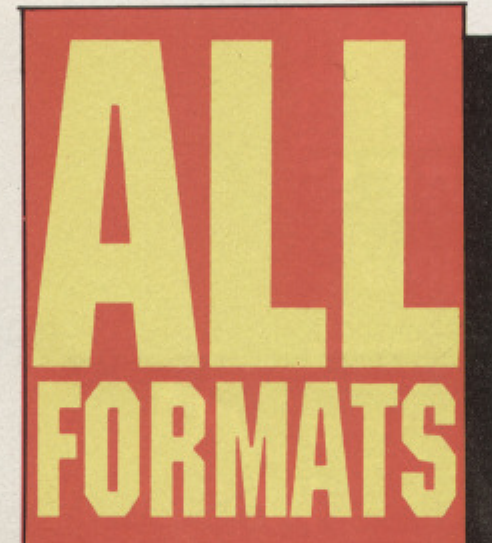
▲ *More plumbing tips from Mario.*

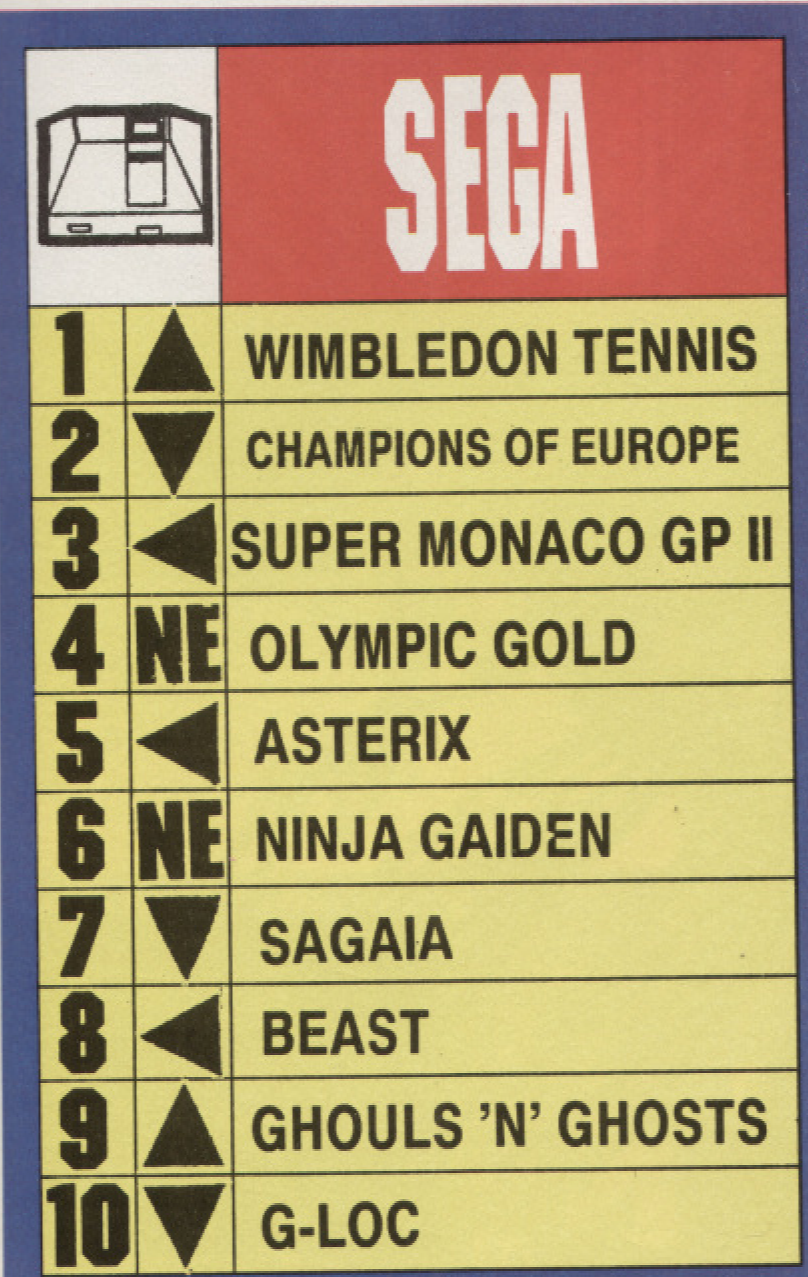
▲ *Green shelled gits infest the NES chart.*



NINTENDO

1	◀	RESCUE RANGERS
2	◀	MARIO III
3	◀	TURTLES
4	NE	HOOK
5	▼	TURTLES II
6	▲	HYPER SOCCER
7	▼	SIMPSONS
8	NE	ADVENTURE ISLAND I
9	▼	RAINBOW ISLANDS
10	NE	FOUR PLAYER TENNIS





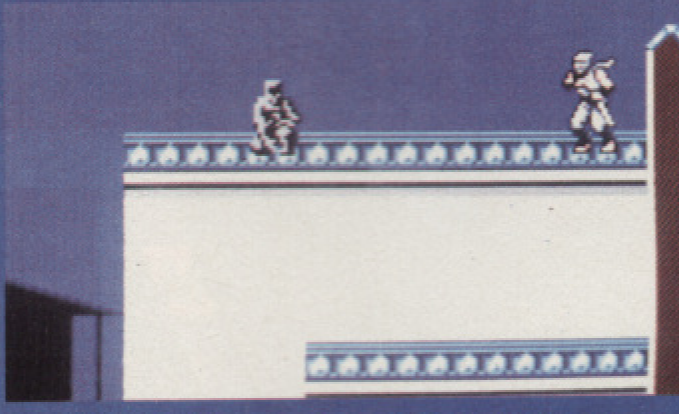
		SEGA
1	▲	WIMBLEDON TENNIS
2	▼	CHAMPIONS OF EUROPE
3	◀	SUPER MONACO GP II
4	NE	OLYMPIC GOLD
5	◀	ASTERIX
6	NE	NINJA GAIDEN
7	▼	SAGAIA
8	◀	BEAST
9	▲	GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
10	▼	G-LOC

SEGA

As predicted last month (though a printing error mysteriously deleted all our predictions!) Wimbledon Tennis, takes the coveted number one position. Hurrah! Champions of Europe slips a place, and Super Monaco II stays at number three. Watch out for Olympic Gold...



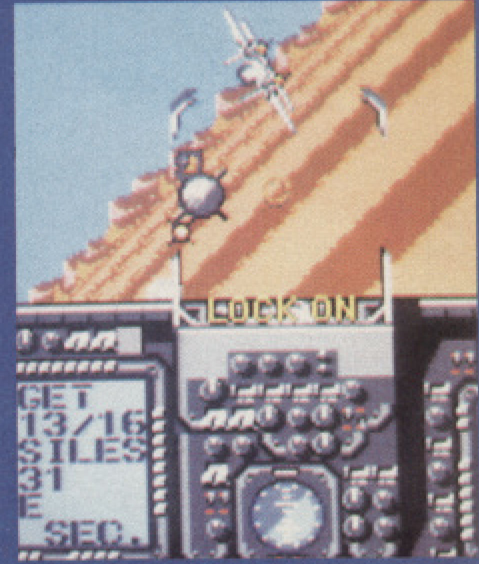
▲ *Asterix holds steady at five.*



▲ *Ninja Gaiden beats its way in to the chart.*



▲ *The glint of armour at nine.*



▲ *Aerial action at ten with G-Loc.*

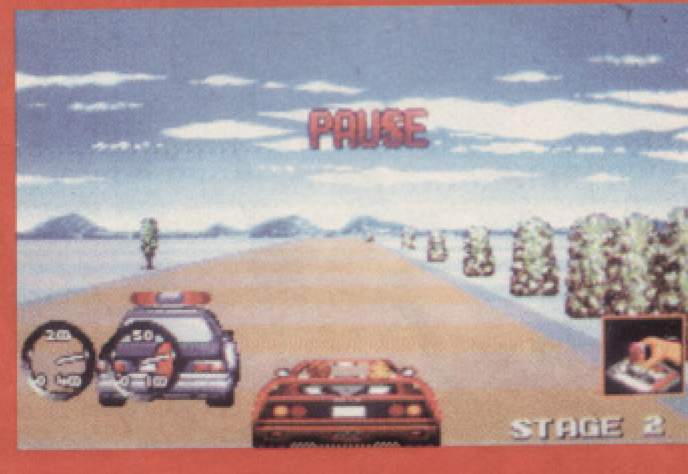
		MEGADRIVE
1	▲	TAZMANIA
2	▲	SUPER MONACO GP II
3	◀	DESERT STRIKE
4	NE	OLYMPIC GOLD
5	▼	KID CHAMELEON
6	▲	TOKI
7	▼	SUPREME BASKETBALL
8	▼	ALISIA DRAGOON
9	NE	DJ BOY
10	NE	TURBO OUTRUN

MEGADRIVE

The graphically amazing Tazmania zooms straight up the charts, knocking the previous number one game, Desert Strike, all the way down to number three. Olympic Gold arrives at number four!



▲ *Devilish fun at the top with Taz.*



▲ *The highway code is flouted again in Outrun.*



▲ *Olympic madness hits the Megadrive.*



▲ *Dark goings on in the middle of the chart.*

PREDICTIONS

MEGADRIVE: TAZMANIA
MASTER SYSTEM: OLYMPIC GOLD
NINTENDO: RESCUE RANGER
GAMEBOY: MARIO (OF COURSE)

Darius was once a planet much like Earth... until it suffered a massive laser bombardment from an evil race of destruction hungry aliens! However, some lucky Darians managed to make it to their space ships and escape into the cosmos, rebuilding their lives on new planets. Some of the Darians even returned to reclaim their home world generations later.

Enter two young Darians, Proco Junior (son of the legendary (?) Gio Proco no less) and Tiat Young. There they were, happily indulging their penchant for certain biological "experiments" aboard their spaceship, when they heard a distress call from the New Darians. Clambering into their combat suits and blasting off, Proco and Tiat prepare themselves for the worst.

That's just as well really, because the aliens have returned to continue their mysterious onslaught on Darius. Our heroes' job is remarkably simple - just travel through the horizontally scrolling levels of the solar system, shooting any evil aliens that cross their path. On the way, they can pick up special power-up pods to aid them on their blasting odyssey. These may provide the ship with a shield, boost score, or add a fine new weapon to the arsenal.

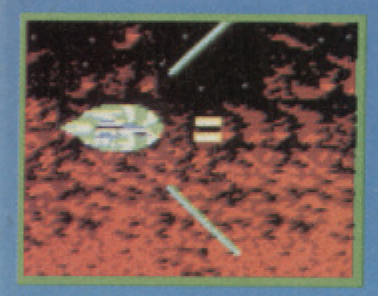
Unfortunately, the aliens haven't left much to chance, calling in massive fleets of battleships and incredibly large end-of-level guardians! Can you guide Proco or Tiat into battle and save Darius from photon-aided slapping at the hands of the mysterious alien menace?



▲ *And you thought seahorses were cute!*

SAGAIA ORIGINS

Sagaia is converted from a vaguely successful Taito coin-op, noteworthy only for its bizarre cabinet. It was one of Taito's pioneer games, using two screens to portray the blasting action. This conversion retains just about all of the arcade's features (apart from the two screens and dual-player mode). The game also appears in a far superior form on the Megadrive, only this version is called Darius II.





▲ *The vessels of Proco Jr and Tiat Young.*

COMMENT



JULIAN

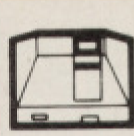
This packs all the features of the original arcade game, but suffers terribly from flickery sprites and slowdown when things get busy. There's certainly plenty of action and the game is challenging too, but to be honest the very poor graphics and severe flicker put me off after a few sessions. It gets really annoying, especially when you get hit by a bullet or baddie that's been all but invisible due to mega flicker! If you're after a blaster, check out R-Type or Powerstrike before even thinking about buying this - they both offer more challenge and better visuals.



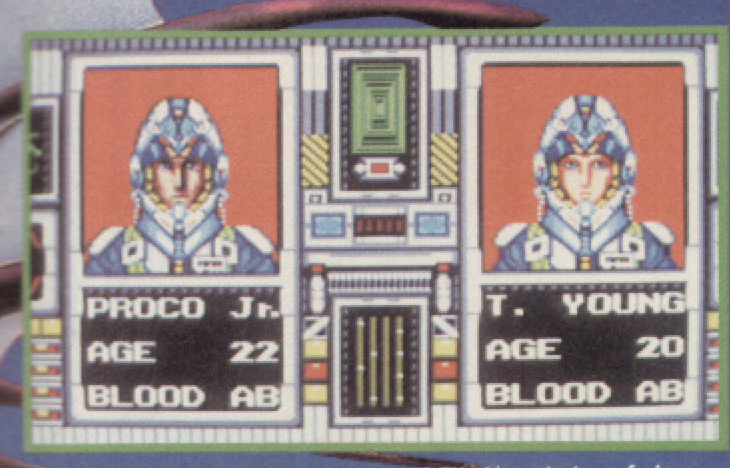
LOOK AT MY ARSENAL

There are a fair few weapons to bolt on to your ship in Sagaia for extra destruction-causing ability. The game gives you bombs and lasers from the beginning, but collection of power-up pods lets you boost their effectiveness. For example, power-up your bombing bays and you're allowed to fire off not one, but two at once. The ship's lasers can be boosted too, allowing for deadlier power and even vertically blasting attachments! For the defence conscious pilot, shields are also available that absorb around five hits before being vapourised.

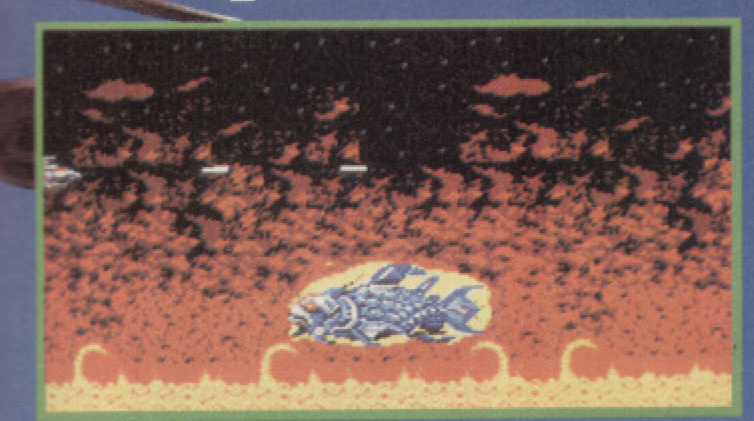








▲ *Proco and Tiat's stats of doom.*



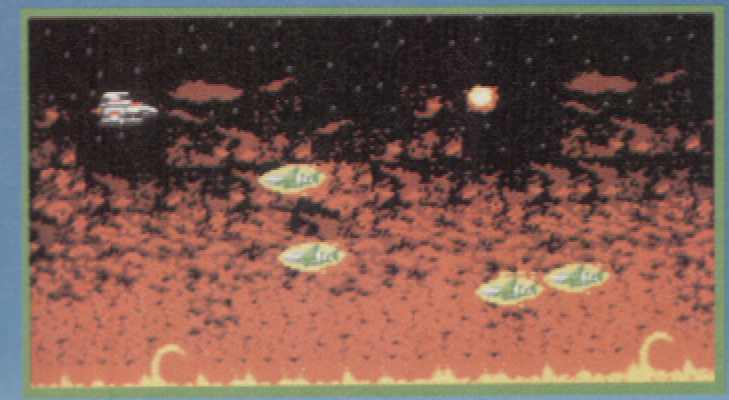
▲ *More fish-related foolishness.*



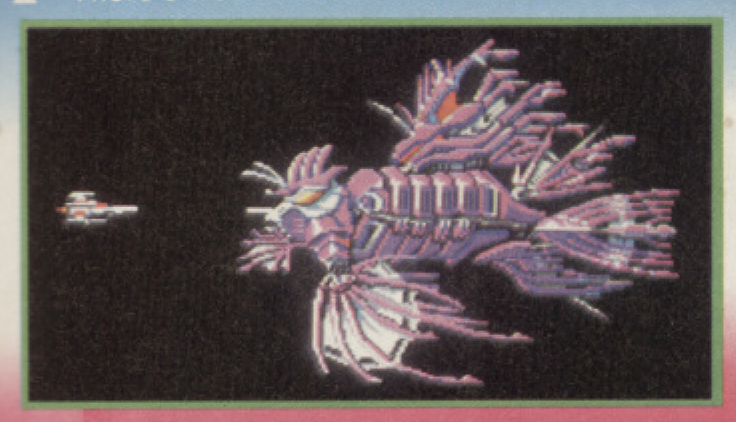
▲ *It's the zone selection zone!*

CHOOSE YOUR ROUTE

Once you've defeated one of the end-of-level guardians in Sagaia, the map screen appears. This enables you to choose your next destination. Some levels are a lot harder than others, so choose carefully!



▲ *There's trouble afoot for our lad...*



▲ *And here it is in fish form!*



A STEAMING SACK OF SHIP

The original version of Sagaia enabled two players to take to the cosmos simultaneously. This feature is not available in the Master System version, but you are allowed to choose between the ships of Proco Junior and Tiat. Being such a hard man, Proco's decided that he doesn't really need many weapons at all, whereas Tiat has stocked up his ship with just about every power-up going! Tiat retains all his original weapons even after death, making his ship far better for beginners. Only real blasting dudes should attempt the mission with Proco's wagon.

COMMENT

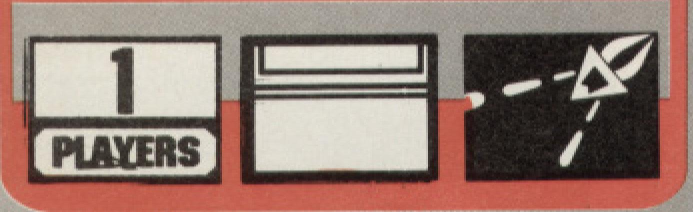


RICH

My first reaction to this game was "Urggghhh!". The graphics in this game are atrocious, with small, boring sprites, average backgrounds and some of the worst flicker yet seen on a console game. The sound, as you might expect, is of a similar low quality. Luckily, the game itself plays fairly well. The action is plenty fast and there are loads of things to shoot (if you can see them through the unforgivable flicker). As an arcade conversion, Sagaia scores pretty highly too. Just about all of the features from the arcade original have made it into the game, including the many bosses and all the power-up weapons. The game is pretty tough too, making it quite a challenge to get through. The flickering graphics really do take a lot of the enjoyment out of the game, though. Sometimes an enemy collides with you, and since you can't see many of the sprites very well, it seems very unfair. Shoot 'em up fanatics might enjoy this, but R-Type is still miles better than this effort.



BY: TAITO
PRICE: £32.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 5
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: OKAY



PRESENTATION 73%

There's a choice of ship, difficulty level and auto-fire option.

GRAPHICS 45%

Small, weedy sprites, lacklustre graphics and eye-strain inducing flicker.

SOUND 58%

The blast frenzy isn't really successfully captured with these lacking sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 67%

If you can get over the flicker, Sagaia does have some fairly good blasting antics on offer.

LASTABILITY 73%

Loads of worlds to conquer, most of them pretty hard to crack.

OVERALL 67%

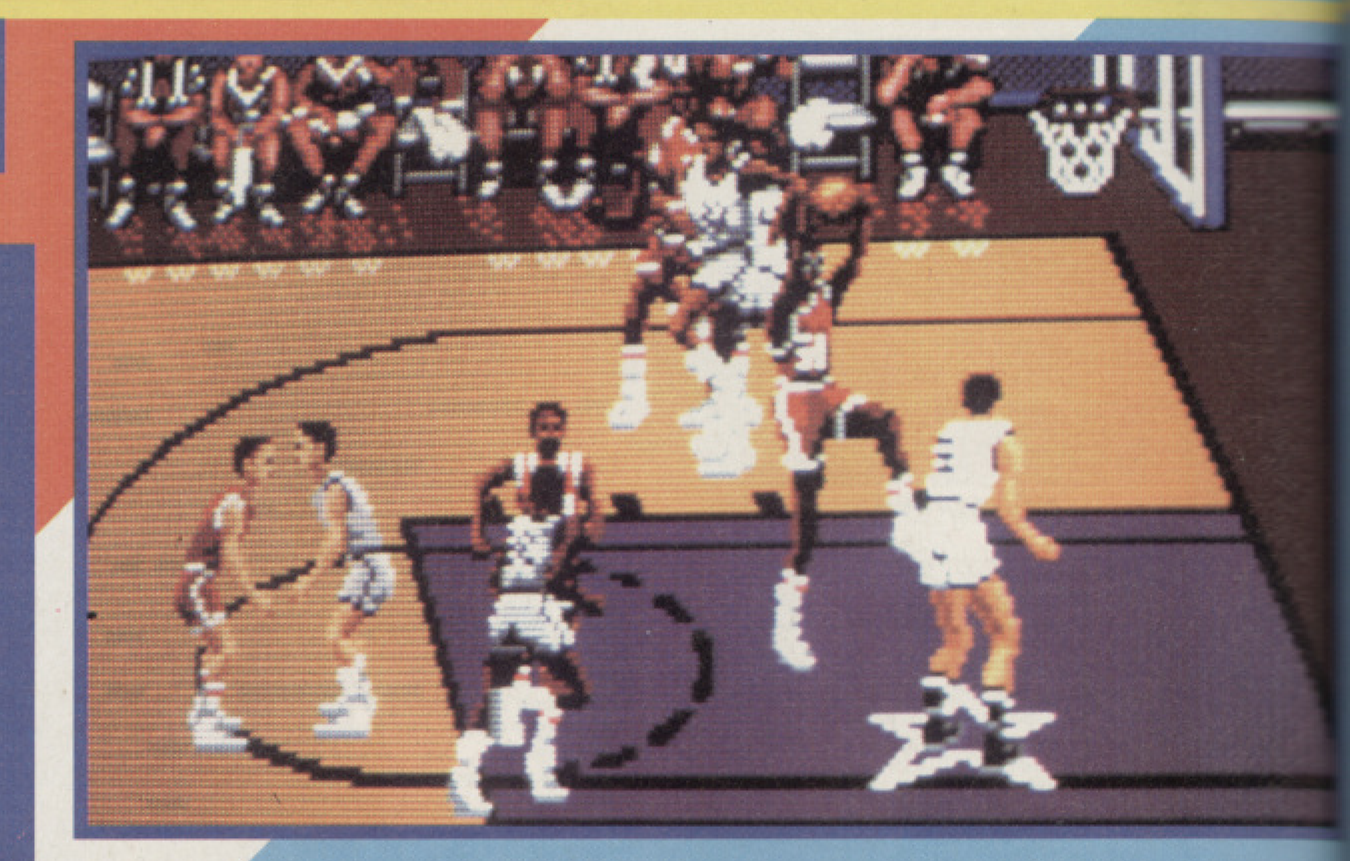
A fairly good blaster ruined by awful graphics and some shoddy programming.

Every High School hero in the US of A dreams of playing in one of the big teams of the NBA and taking the trophy in the biggest basketball tournament in the world. This means rubbing shoulders with the likes of Michael "Air" Jordan, "Magic" Johnson and being paid vast amounts for wearing ludicrously expensive trainers.

Now Electronic Arts have recreated this most American of sports in a new sports simulation for the Megadrive. Every effort has been made to include all the rules of the official game like fouls, substitutions and suspensions.

The game offers a variety of play options. You have the choice of one-player, two-players, head-to-head and two players working as a team against a computer opponent.

As well as the 5-on-5 on-court action, the package includes a seriously large wad of options and stats for you to study and tweak. Players have the option to choose two teams from a list of 18 to play either a single game or to enter the NBA tournament. You can also alter the length of the periods and practice at small town level before playing showtime basketball. At any time you are able to call up a detailed analysis of each player's performance, and make those heart-breaking decisions when someone needs dropping from the team. But then, it's tough at the top so... let's play ball.



BULLS



BASKET CASES

For those inept enough not to know the basic rules of basketball, it's all very simple. The game consists of two parts - offence and defence. Each team alternates between these two roles. The team which has possession of the ball is the offence, and its object is to score a basket at the other team's end (worth two points). The defence's job is to prevent this and gain possession. The game is split into four periods, and each team has the option to call additional "time-outs" if it has possession. There are other rules governing play, if you break them your heading for one of the following violations:



HOTSHOTS

Practice hard at Bulls vs Lakers and you might be able to pull of some of the special "marquee" shots that are the trademarks of the best players. The stars perform these aerial miracles if they take a shot within a specific zone of the court. Timing and positioning is vital to execute Karl Malone's "In Your Face" Jam, or Mr Kipling's" Windmill Finger Roll."

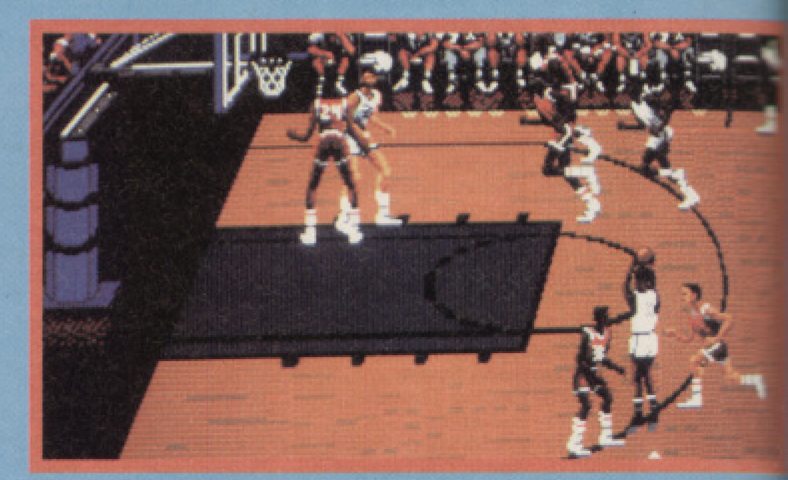
CHICAGO BULLS

YEAR STATISTICS DEFENSE

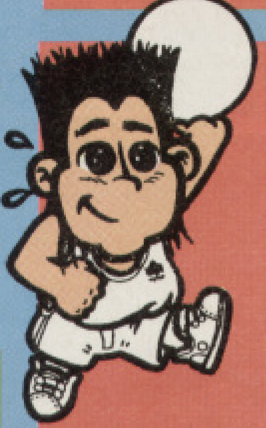
PLAYER	POS.	PF	DQ	BLK	STL	RBND
GRANT	-F	203	2	69	95	659
PIPPEN	-F	270	3	93	193	595
CARTWRIGHT	-C	167	0	15	32	486
PAXSON	-G	136	0	3	62	91
JORDAN	-G	229	1	83	223	492
ARMSTRONG	G	118	0	4	70	149
HODGES	G	74	0	2	34	42
HOPSON	G	79	0	14	25	109
KING	F	134	0	42	24	208
LEVINGSTON	F	143	0	43	29	225
PERDUE	C	147	1	57	23	336
WILLIAMS	C	51	0	13	12	90

SCORE: 0 TIME: 2:00 TIME OUTS: 5
A: SUB. PLAYER B: MORE STAT.
C: SWAP TEAM START: GO TO GAME

▲ *Stats, stats, Get your stats.*



COMMENT

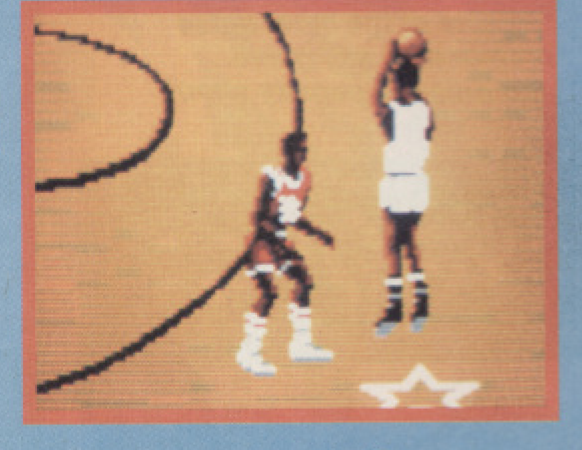


JULIAN

I was fortunate enough to be in Chicago last year when the Bulls and Lakers were playing the series this game is based on, and since then have been waiting for this with anticipation. It's certainly been a long time coming, but I'm glad to say the wait has been worth it. EA have produced the most in-depth and involved Basketball game yet seen on the Megadrive. It takes quite a while to get the hang of things, but once mastered you can steal, intercept, pass and slam dunk your way to victory. There are loads of options to tweak, and the variety of two-player modes keeps interest high. The graphics and sound aren't exactly brilliant, but the gameplay is good enough to more than make up for their deficiencies. If you're a basketball fan, this is a must!

I LIKE BOUNCING, BOING, BOING, BOING

Bulls vs Lakers gives you two ways to score. Press the A or C button outside the penalty box and you attempt a jump shot. The odds are slim, but if you score you get 3 points as a reward. Otherwise, use the A button to take close shots or special "Marquee" shots when you're in the zone. If you have possession, the B button is used for passing. But if you're defending its function is to select the nearest player to the ball.



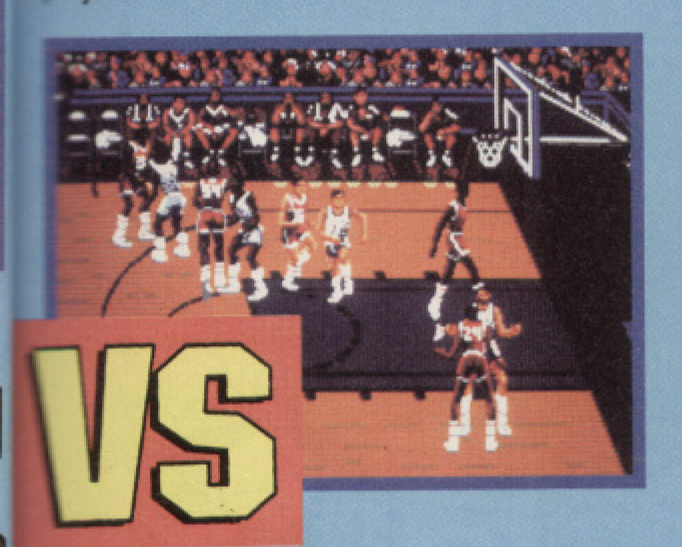
▲ Go on lad, jump to it.

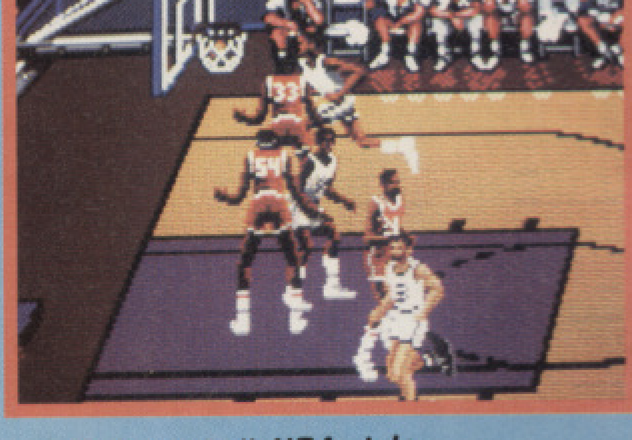


▲ The bench - purgatory for all dirty players.



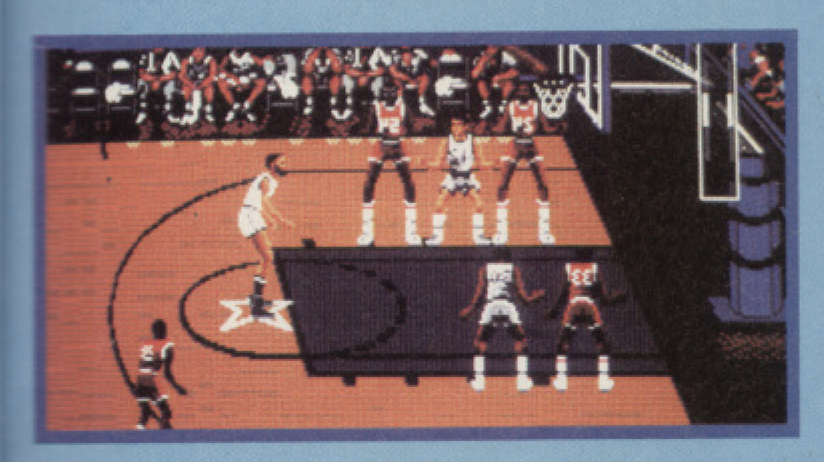
▲ The teams join up for some folk dancing.





▲ Spot the ball, NBA style.

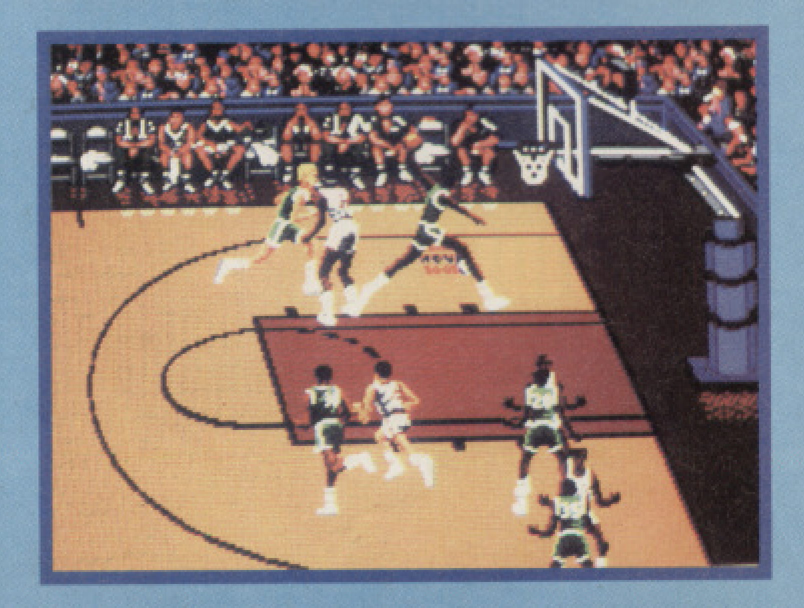
VS LAKERS





THE BIG ONE

Single games are only a preparation for the ultimate challenge of the NBA tournament. If you enter this you face some awesome competition from the best team players in basketball. The eighteen teams taking part compete in two leagues, the Western and Eastern conferences, and each league fields one team for the final. You can follow your progress on a massive scrolling tournament-board. The tournament stages are each played over the best of 7 games, with each team playing home and away. The computer records all the performance stats for each of your players as you progress. Thankfully a password facility has been included for you to start from where you left off.



DUNKIN' DO-NOTS

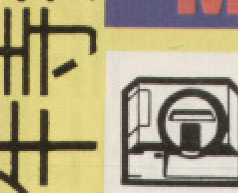
TRAVELLING: You are penalised if your player tries to dribble again after stopping.

TIME: After gaining possession you only have 24 seconds to attempt a shot. You also must move up to the opponent's half within 10 seconds.

BACK COURT: Once you have left your own half with the ball you can't pass it back to a player there.

CHARGING: The worst of all. A good ref does not tolerate any physical contact. But then again, he isn't always looking.

If any violations occur on the court a throw in is given to the other team. However, if they happen near the baskets two penalty shots are awarded. When a penalty is awarded all the players move up to the end, and the penalty taker stands in front of the basket. Then, in the screen's top right corner you will see two strips - one horizontal, one vertical, and a dot moving from end to end inside each. To score a penalty you have to stop the dot, by pressing the A button, slap bang in the centre of each strip. But for all that skill you are only awarded with one point, nyah!



REVIEW

One of the most tense moments in any game... the dreaded penalty shoot.

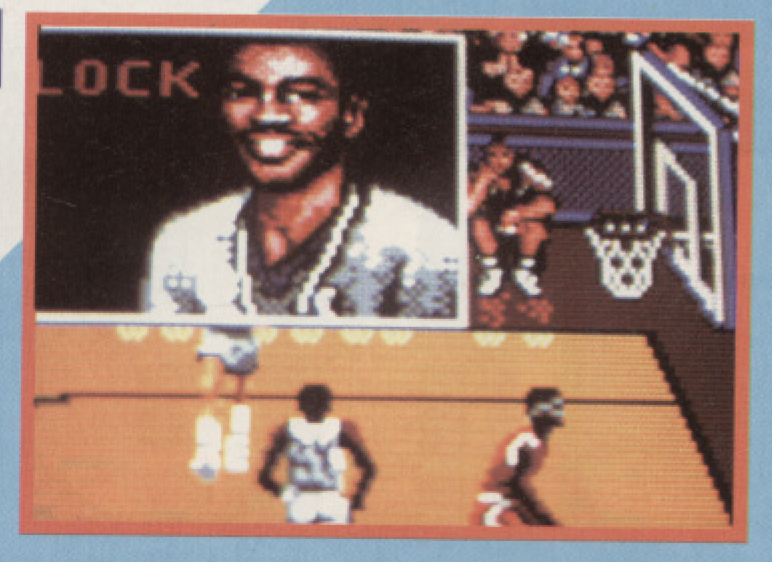


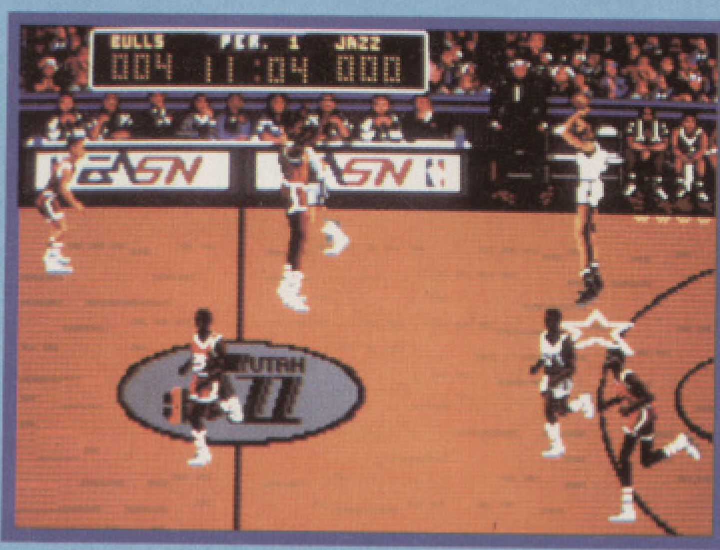
COMMENT



GUS

The look of this game initially put me off - it ain't the prettiest basketball game there is. To make things worse, the control system takes time to master with multiple functions for each button. After all that I found it was quite a playable simulation after all, but I still have some serious reservations about it. Any basketball game worth its salt should allow lots of stealing and interception, but in Bulls vs Lakers it's very hard to steal and you can't intercept a pass, which seriously limits the gameplay. Also, the amount of stats crammed into the game may impress you, but they are not much use when you can't distinguish the players on the court. The big omission, though, is any form of game strategy - not even the option of selecting different defence formations. Despite this, and the rather cramped feel of the court area, there's sports fun to be had here, especially if two players team up against the megadrive. But, personally speaking, I'd rather stick to good ol' Super Real Basketball.

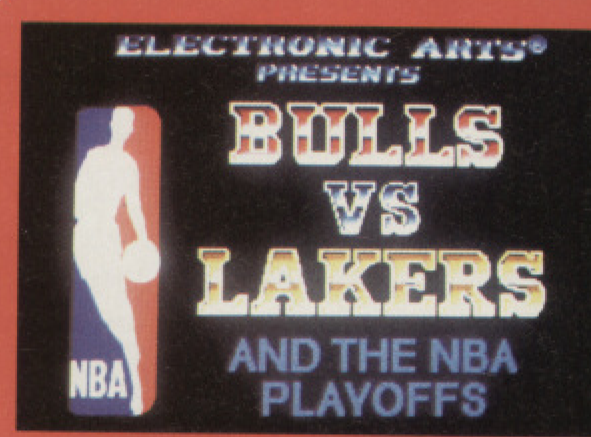




DUNKS, DROPS AND VIDEO TAPES

One novel feature of Bulls vs Lakers is the instant replay mode. You use this when the game is paused and see yourself deftly outwitting a broken defence (or not). The joypad works like a VCR with freeze-frame and fast forward/backward.



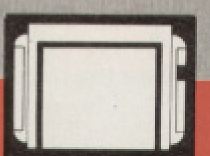


BY: EA

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: N/A
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: OKAY







PRESENTATION 93%

Loads of options and stats to look at and tweak. In-game presentation is good too.

GRAPHICS 74%

The action sometimes gets cluttered, and the sprites look as if they could do with a good feed.

SOUND 80%

Hubbard-esque music on the title screen and the excellent speech create just the right atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 83%

The controls are tricky at first, but the game pace is quite fast...

LASTABILITY 80%

...and with oodles of options and challenging gameplay, this isn't a game which'll be mastered overnight.

OVERALL 83%

An involved simulation which should definitely appeal to serious basketball fans. Arcade players might find it a bit too much, though.

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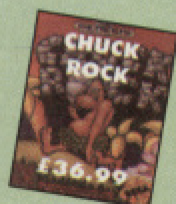
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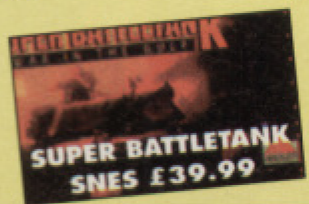




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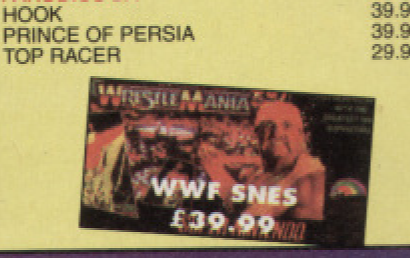


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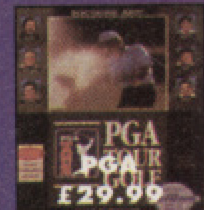
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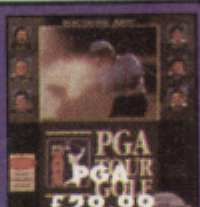
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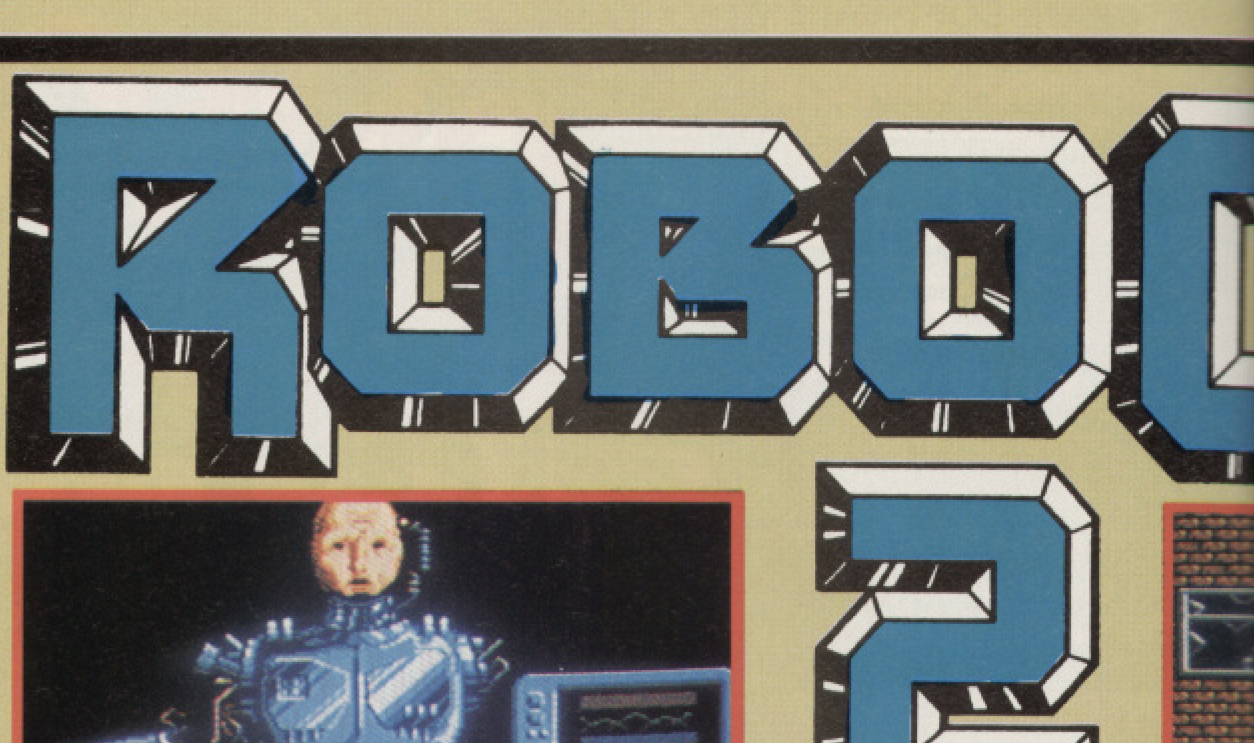
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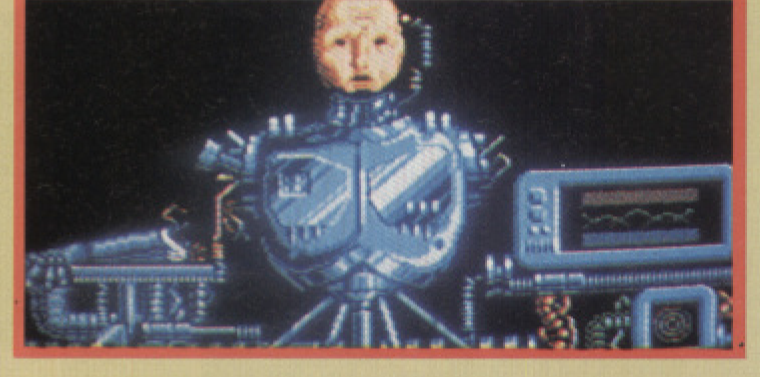
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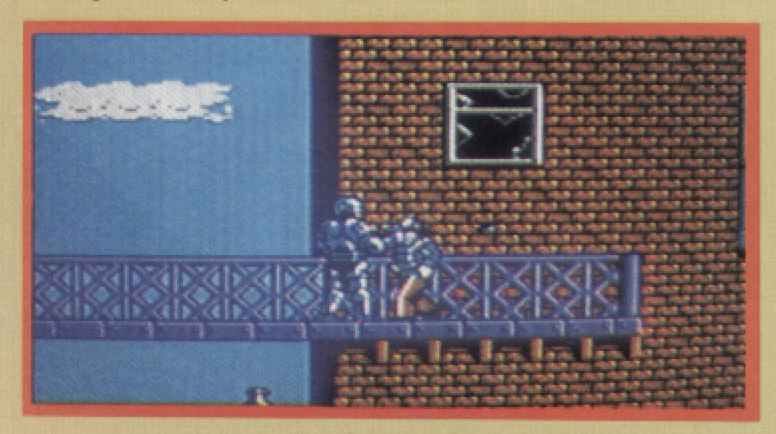
If you're stupid enough to be into drugs then you might be interested in Nuke, the new designer narcotic to hit the streets of Old Detroit. But on the other hand, there are a few things that might just put you off.

First, it's instantly addictive, second it's quite lethal, third Robocop has a nasty habit of shooting people found in possession of Nuke and fourth it gives you spots. None of this has stopped Cain the loony from building up a huge market for the stuff in Old Detroit, a market which you, as Robocop, must destroy. As everyone knows the best way to do this is to raid all the safehouses and factories which supply and produce Nuke and shoot everyone except the people in charge, whom it's handy to arrest. Oh, and seize all of the drugs too. This is Robo's new mission in life, one which you must help him carry out.

Robocop 2 is another horizontally scrolling platform blaster from Ocean. It's more or less a conversion of their home computer titles starring you as the running, jumping and shooting cyborg on a mission of doom. There are several levels to conquer before the final showdown with Cain, who is now transformed into the deadly Robocop 2.









SEIZING DRUGS FOR FUN AND PROFIT



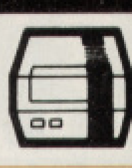
During each mission, Robo arrests a certain proportion of major criminals and seizes a set amount of drugs before he progresses to the next level. These limits are quite tough, and often a secret room must be found in order to complete the level. For instance, in level one there is a secret underground sewerage way in which most of the Nuke is stored. If Robo doesn't go down here he doesn't confiscate enough drugs to pass through to level two.

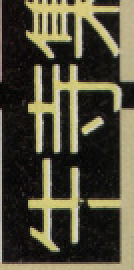
▲ *Hang on in there baby...*

COMMENT

NES owners aren't exactly having a lot of luck with their Robocop games. The original Robocop was pretty sad, and this one is not a lot better. The problem lies in Robo's inertia, which makes him all but uncontrollable. You tend to find yourself sliding all over the place-often to your doom as you plummet over the edge of a platform to certain death. The other major downer of the game is the difficulty level. The quotas for completion of each level are so tight that missing just one phial of Nuke bars your way to the next level, and the firing range is nigh-on impossible to beat. This is really a shame as the graphics and sound are much improved over Robocop and the game itself would be quite a laugh if it wasn't so difficult.

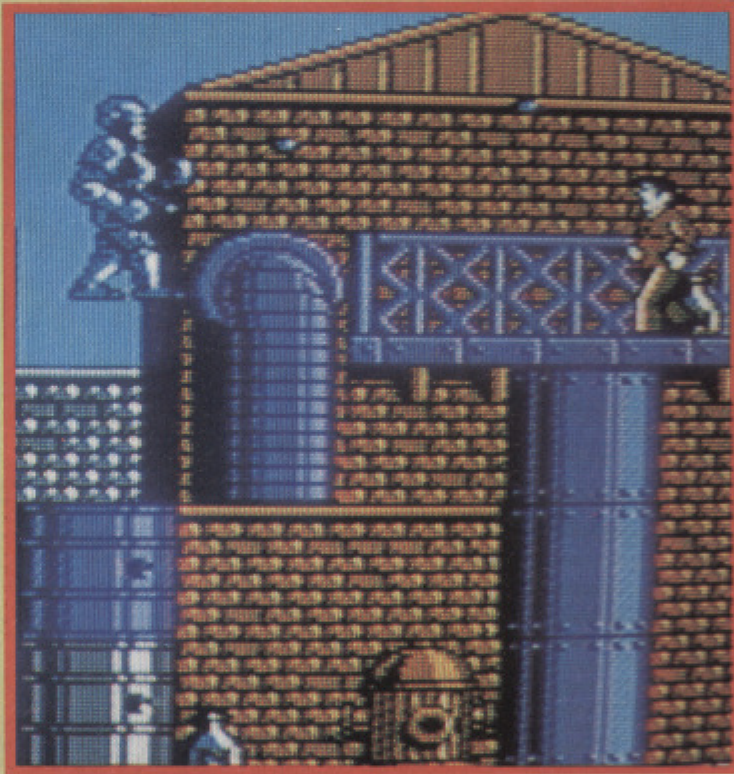
RAD





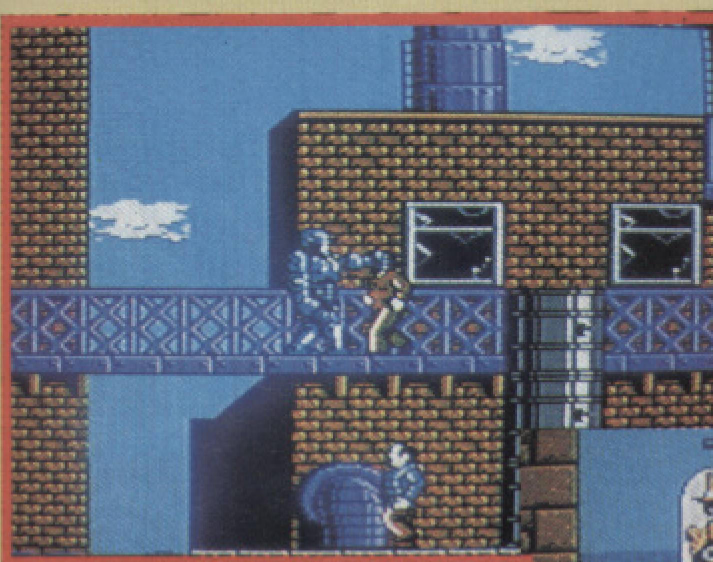


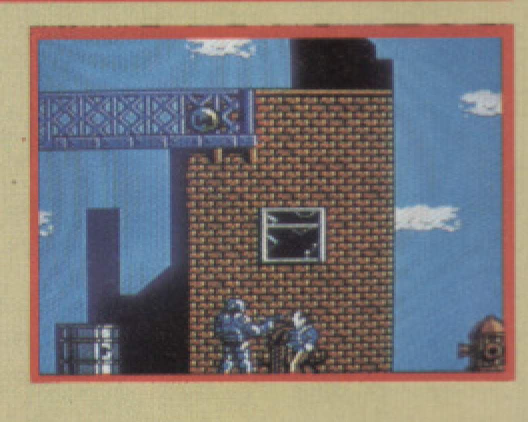


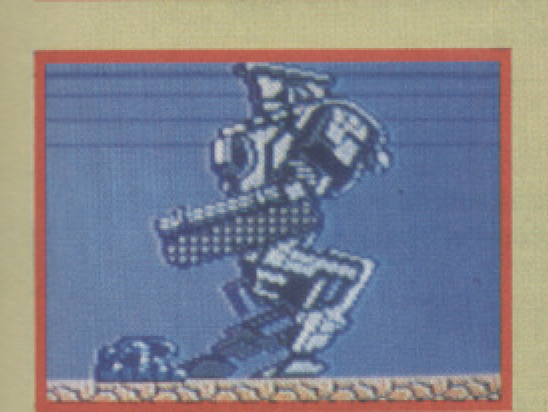




▲ *Robocop displays his shiny helmet and bizarre (if not downright illegal) "surgical probe".*

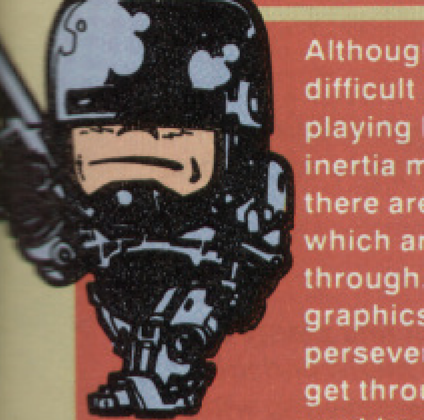








COMMENT

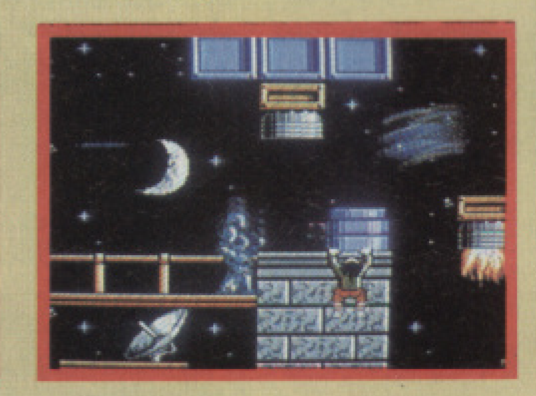


Although it's a frustratingly difficult game, I actually enjoyed playing Robocop 2. Granted, the inertia makes the going tough and there are some parts of the game which are incredibly tricky to get through, but the high quality of the graphics and sound made me persevere with it and eventually get through. There are plenty of neat touches to keep you interested and loads of secret screens to discover, so there are never any dull bits. Experienced platform players should love Robocop 2, but those who lack patience or ability might well find themselves tearing their hair out with frustration after a few sessions. My advice is to give it a go before buying.

JULIAN



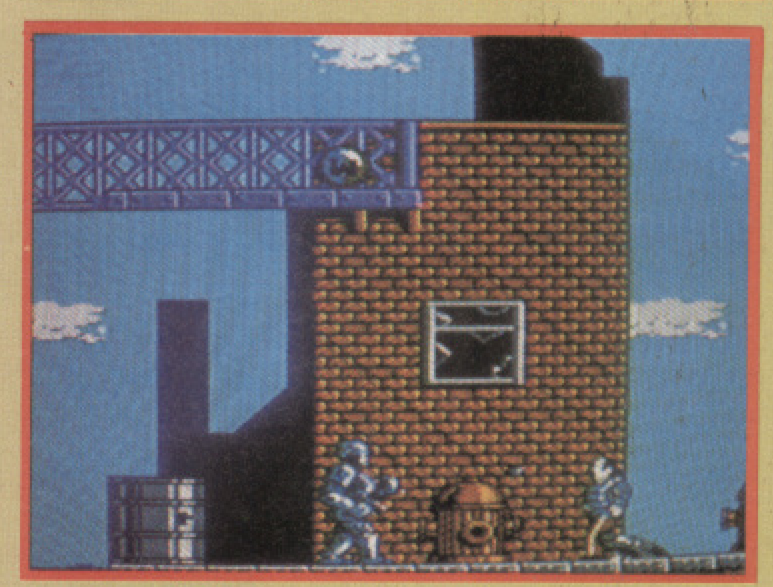
▲ *Fly, fly you fools!*



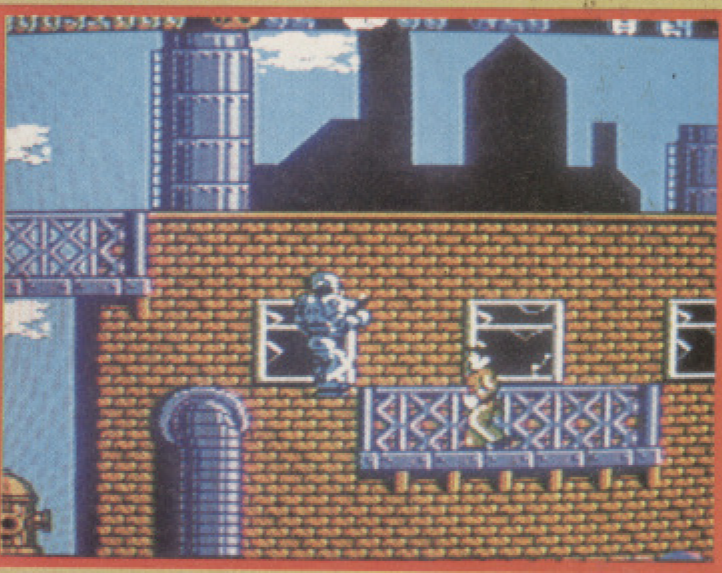
CAIN-RELATED SPANKING



Easily the most impressive part of Robo 2 is his showdown with the robotic Cain. This giant beast is almost a full screen tall and is armed with all manner of offensive weaponry, including spread-fire machine guns, Vulcan cannons and a giant dual missile launcher! Not only this, but he regularly takes great pleasure in charging across the screen at our poor hero and squashing him against the walls, just like his idol Giant Haystacks!

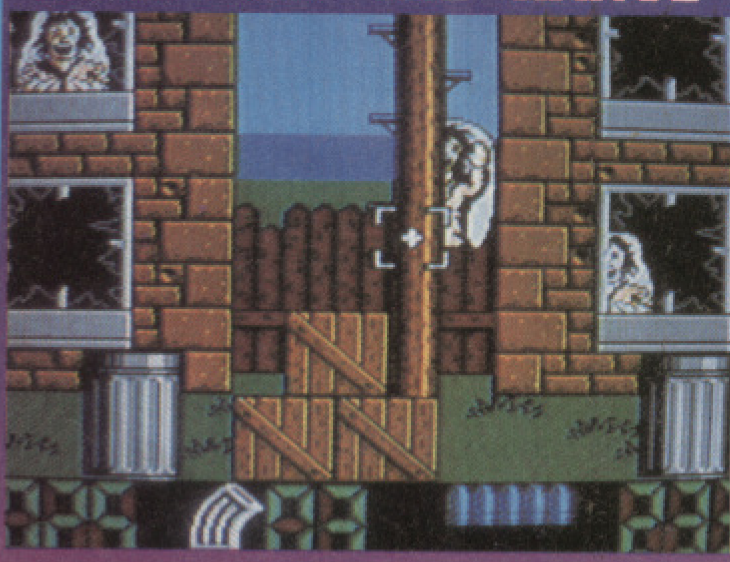


Shoot! Shoot now! Kill! Kill!



Not even innocent window-cleaners are safe from Robocop.

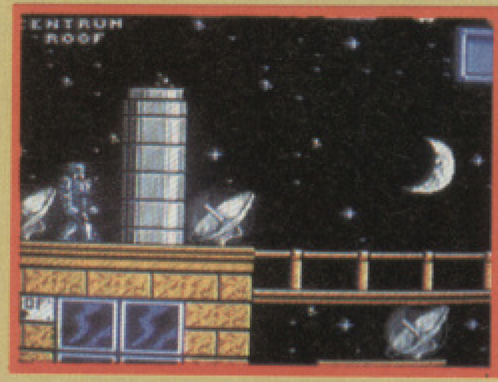
HOME ON THE RANGE

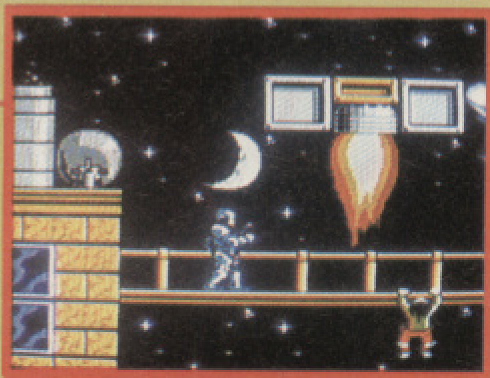


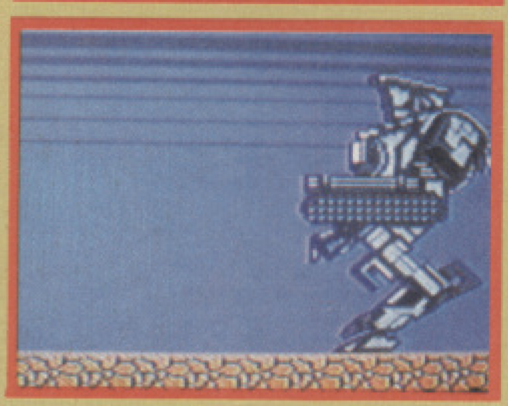
Should Robo fail to meet his quota the first time he attempts a level, he is given one last chance before being sent back to repeat it. Robo is taken to a firing range to re-calibrate his sights. A number of cutout targets appear in windows or peek out from behind obstacles, and Robo wastes as many as possible to advance to the next stage. This is all made a smidgen more difficult by his limited ammo supply and the ever-decreasing timer. Not to mention the "innocents" which sometimes appear and must not be shot. Still, in his favour there are the extra time and ammo icons which drift down the screen. Shoot these and Robo's chances of passing are greatly increased.

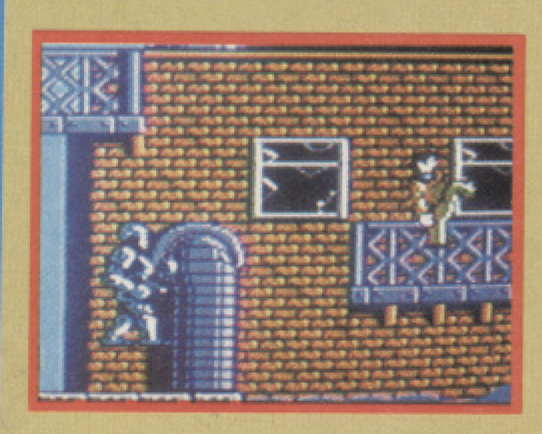
IT'S NO-NO, SMALL ROBOT YOU KNOW

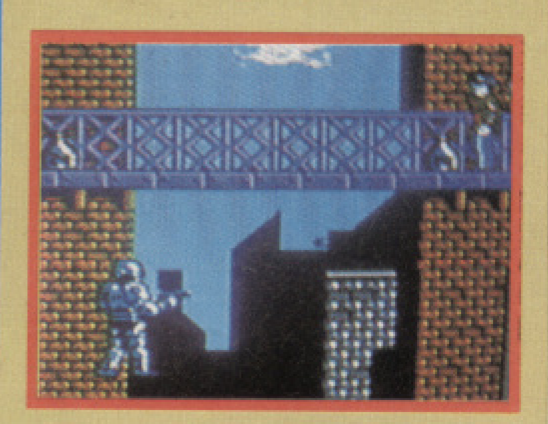
Robocop 2 should even now be winging it's way to a Gameboy near you. Ocean's Game Boy conversion is fairly similar to the NES version, although the inertia isn't quite so severe and the game is a mite easier. If you're a Game Boy owner it's one to look out for.







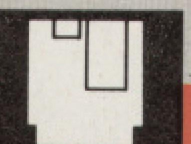


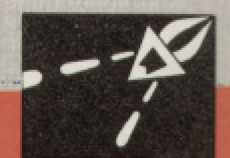




BY: OCEAN
PRICE: £TBA
RELEASE DATE: TBA
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: POOR







PRESENTATION 73%
A few options, nice title, intermission and game over screens.

GRAPHICS 82%
Chunky sprites animate themselves quite well over colourful backgrounds.

SOUND 81%
The tunes are quite good and the sound effects are suitably meaty.

PLAYABILITY 73%
The high inertia and tough difficulty level makes this a very tricky game to get into.

LASTABILITY 71%
Experienced players will find plenty to keep them busy, but novices might find the going too tough to be worth persevering with.

OVERALL 72%
A tough and demanding game which should appeal to experienced platform fans, but not to beginners. Try before you buy.

A DEVIL OF AN IDEA!

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GALA

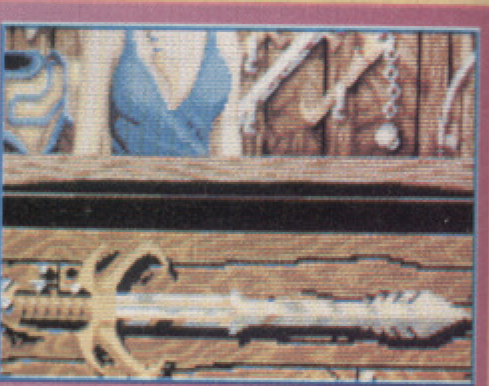
The traditional eighteenth birthday party tends to involve a lot of noise, booze, and general debauchery. Princess Lucanna's birthday bash was faithfully following this formula until Thanatos, an evil dragon, arrived on the scene. Thanatos had been imprisoned a thousand years ago, and after his escape he vowed to take his revenge. So before you can say, "It's rare to come across such an original plot", Lucanna is whisked away to Thanatos' lair. The only hope for the princess is Galahad, a young guard in her service. The king has given him the duty of finding her and rescuing the Kingdom from eternal darkness.

Megadrive owners are in for quite a journey, as Galahad traverses three increasingly deadly worlds, each infested with assorted mutants, traps, and tricky puzzles. Galahad begins his journey carrying only his trusty sword for assistance. It soon becomes obvious, what with the ensuing bloodshed, that the brave knight needs special armour and weapons. Fortunately, Galahad has the chance to rob coins from dead enemies and go on a spending spree in one of the many shops that cross his path.

On each level Galahad is given a task that involves finding an object, and on occasions defeating a boss in the process. Once our metal clad chum has managed this, he has to find the portal to make it through to the next level. So down the last of those party pints and unsheathe that chopper! Between the bother and the booze, Galahad's looking at a pretty heavy hang-over!

AR-SE-NAL! AR-SE-NAL!

As well as armour to improve on there are plenty of weapons for Galahad to get his mitts on. Like the armour the strength of these weapons vary. Galahad starts with a short training sword capable of inflicting one hit point to enemies. This does okay for the first few levels, but as enemies get tougher, Galahad's weapons need to do the same. The dagger and long sword give one and two damage points respectively. The Tempest blade inflicts two hit points and increases Galahad's speed and jumping abilities. The lion blade is the strongest sword damaging your enemies to the tune of five points. Besides swords there are rune bombs and a suicide weapon which delivers 20 hit points to any enemy on screen in exchange for one of Galahad's lives. Like the armour, the best weapons are the most expensive.



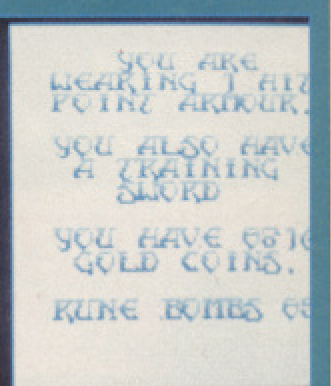





AHAD

WINDOW SHOPPING

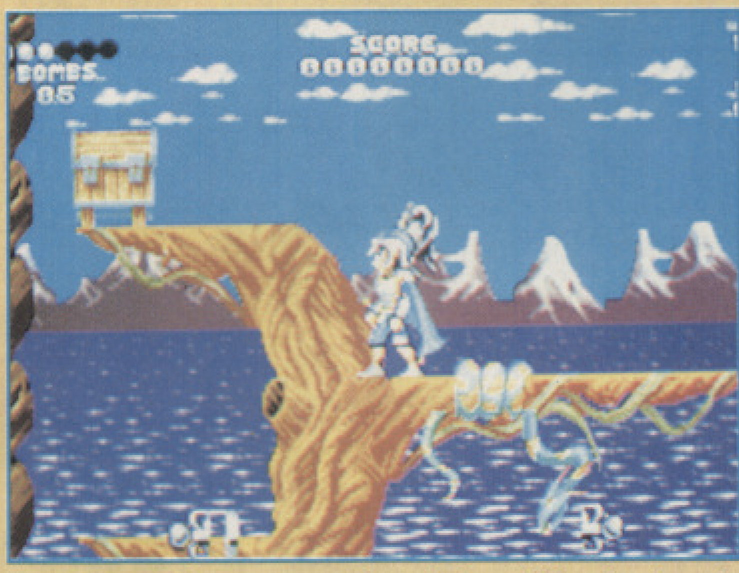
The equipment that Galahad sets off with is rather feeble and while it does its job satisfactorily on the first few levels, it starts to become obvious that his weapons and armour are outclassed. Fortunately for Galahad there are shops situated at various points throughout the game. Here he has the chance to improve his equipment. The downer is that he has to pay for the privilege. The only way to get hold of ready cash is to slice open chests and knock off enemies. Feel free to go after cash with the ferocity of Gordon Gekko, but don't die in the process because this halves the number of coins in your wallet.




CHARGE IT UP!

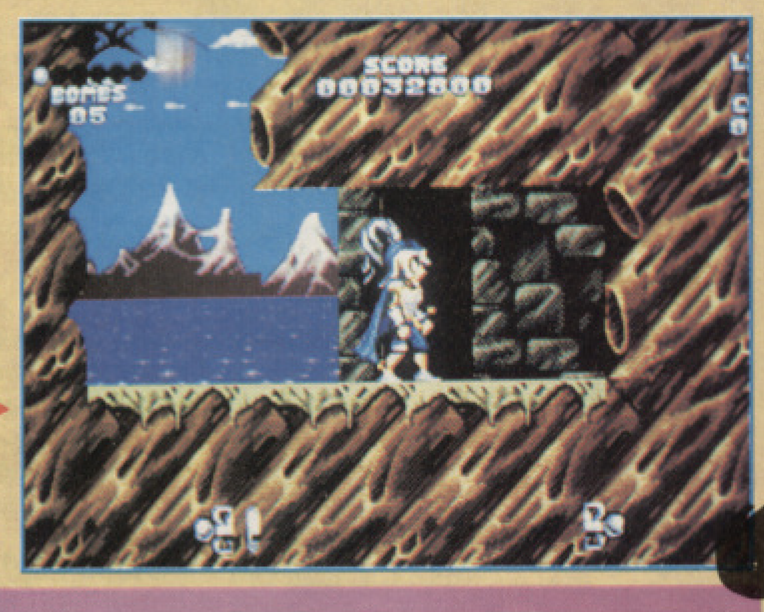
The eagle-eyed amongst you may have noticed that there is a bar across the bottom of the screen. This is the energy indicator bar and it comes into action when using certain weapons. Before the Lion blade and the Suicide weapon can be activated, this bar needs a full charge. This is done by holding down the fire button, and then releasing it to engage the weapon. Increasing the power of the Tempest blade is optional, but on some stages in the game it proves essential.



Lots of fun up trees involving a big chest and a long snake (!).



Galahad comes face to face with Tyson, a particularly aggressive guard dog, and fires up his blade.





SAFE FROM HARM

Any knight could tell you that it's pretty damn important to wear armour before rushing off into battle. The initial strength of Galahad's armour depends on the game's difficulty setting. In normal mode he starts with blue armour, allowing him to sustain three hit points. Purple is the weakest armour which is capable of taking one hit only. Then comes green with two damage points. Silver armour enables Galahad to sustain four hits and gold armour five. The strongest armour is black, and Galahad can handle six attacks wearing this. Quite naturally, the better the armour, the higher the cost.



This black armour is the strongest that money

COMMENT

RICH

I haven't played the Amiga version of Galahad so I can't comment on whether or not it's a good conversion. What I can say is that it's the most absorbing arcade adventure I've played for quite a while. It sort of reminds me of Shadow of the Beast with its excellent graphics (yes, I do think they are actually quite smart, contrary to what Rob thinks), but the gameplay has been radically improved, with a greater choice of direction and more interesting puzzles. However, it does have its faults. There are some situations where you seem doomed to lose energy no matter what you do. Also, a lot of the backgrounds seem to do you harm even where you least expect it. For example, just touching the back of a snake loses you energy (and there was me thinking that only a serpent's fangs could poison you!). Other than that though, Galahad is a large, addictive arcade adventure well worth taking a look at.

COMMENT

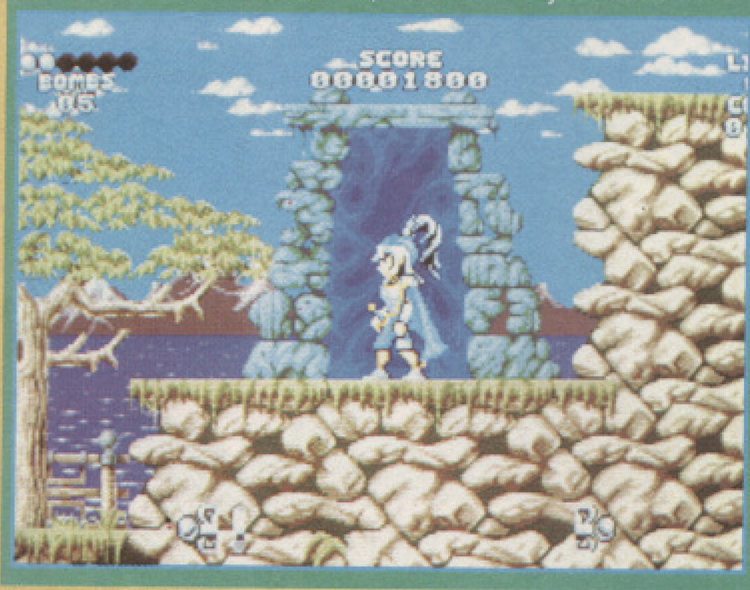


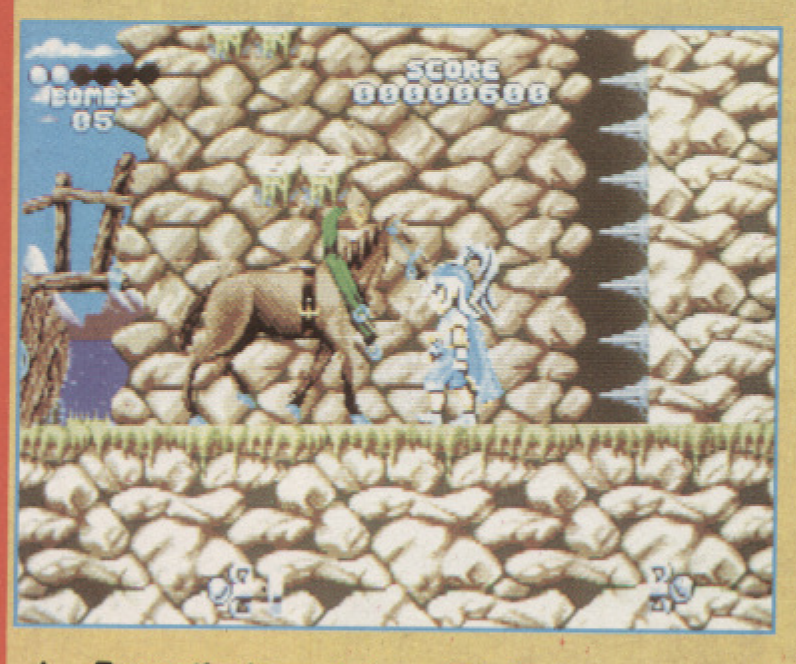
ROB

I didn't know quite what to make of this game when I first played it. I wasn't overly impressed with the graphics, which lack the detail of other EA games. The sprites' cardboard movements meant the animation failed to raise any eyebrows either. As far as platform games go this doesn't come close to Robocod. But then, Galahad isn't a standard platform game anyway. It makes up for lack of visuals with some very involved gameplay. Having to buy weapons and armour gave the game a challenge beyond the set task, and it meant I had to take educated risks concerning what to buy, and whether to go hunting for more sponduliks. Galahad actually plays quite well - the controls are responsive and it is easy to direct jumps and attacks. Now and then the collision detection causes a frown but not enough to really affect the gameplay. Galahad would make a pretty dull game, but it saves itself by replacing the unoriginality in the platform action with some diverting and involved challenges. Not an EA classic, but entertaining all the same.

THROUGH THE PORTAL

When Galahad has accomplished the task set for him at the beginning of the level he has to find his way to the teleport in order to make it to the next level. The teleport doesn't become operational until Galahad has completed the task set. It is often worth hunting down the teleport first, because this saves time searching later on, when Galahad's power is likely to be low.



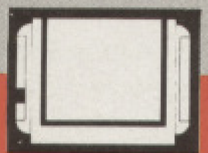


▲ *Bessy the horse brings Galahad's barrels of finest ale.*



BY: EA
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE DATE: AUGUST
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 1
CONTINUES: 1
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: OK







PRESENTATION 91%

Nice intro sequence. Loads of options like difficulty settings and pad configurations.

GRAPHICS 86%

On the whole, decent enough, with smooth scrolling, great sprites and good backdrops.

SOUND 90%

Some excellent 808 State-esque tunes, although not wholly appropriate. The sound effects aren't bad either.

PLAYABILITY 84%

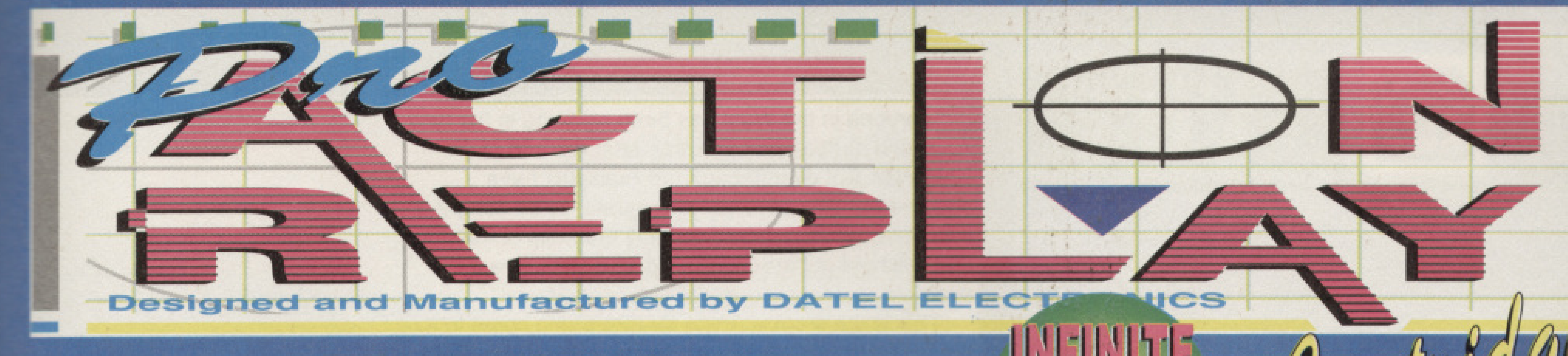
The controls are pretty smooth and response is fine, but there is some dodgy collision detection on occasions.

LASTABILITY 90%

There are 22 levels, making for months of tough, addictive play.

OVERALL 86%

An excellent arcade adventure, marred only by a slight lack of originality.



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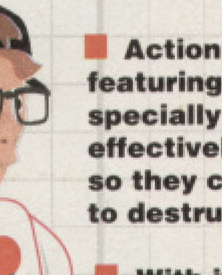
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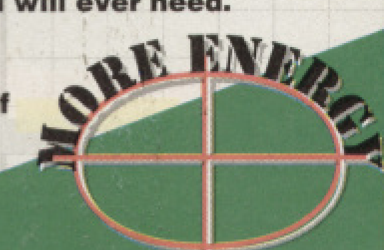
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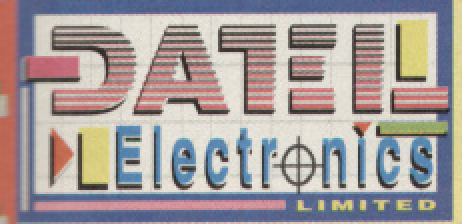
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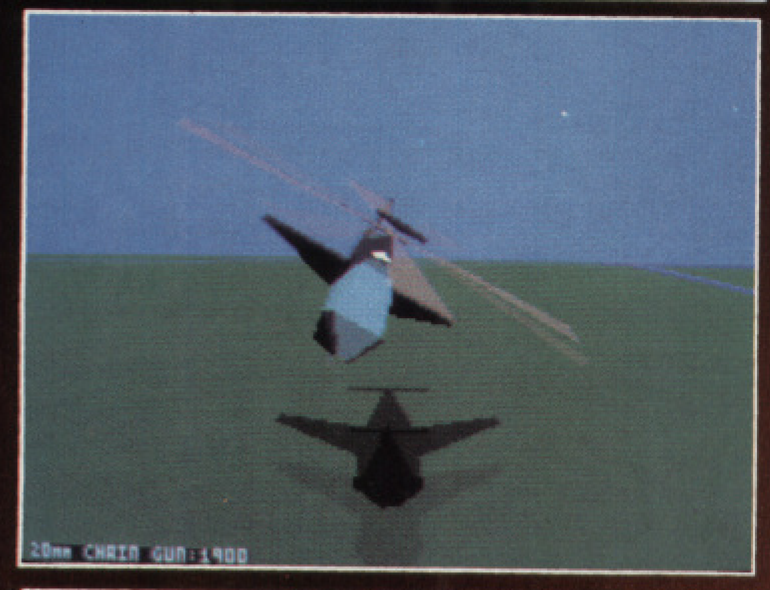


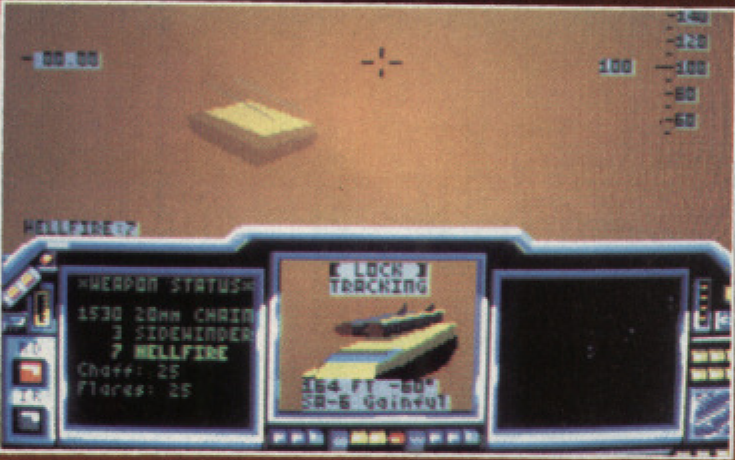
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REVIEW





Everyone in the West has been rejoicing in the new world peace that has come after the end of the Cold War. But even though the Russians have become our allies, we can't let ourselves be caught with our guard down by the many enemies of freedom that still hold out around the world. Take Libya for example...

This is the stern warning for those who come to fly the LHX Attack Chopper in Electronic Arts' new flight sim. This conversion of the PC hit takes you into some modern day combat zones in order to create some serious disorder. You have over 30 missions to fly, covering a wide variety of tasks, including dropping supplies and taking out command bunkers with the latest in weapon technology. At your disposal is either the McDonnell Douglas AH-64A Apache, or the untested LHX Stealth Chopper.

Between you and your objectives lies a vast range of enemy hardware that demand some precision flying to avoid or destroy. The Dictator seems to have assembled an endless arsenal of SAM batteries, GASKIN missile launchers and HIND helicopters to pit against you - and you alone.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

HEAVY ARMOUR

The Apache holds four weapon systems and the LHX carries three. Each has a specific combat role in each mission.

CANNON: Standard on both choppers is the 20mm chain gun. The armour piercing shells are excellent at close range and auto-targeted by the navigation computer. You have 1000 rounds to dispose of.

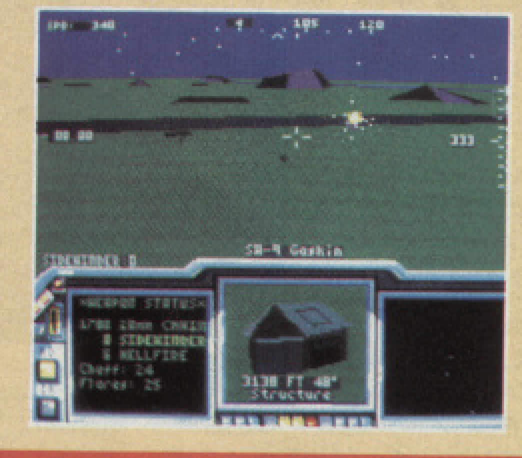
SIDEWINDERS: The Sidewinder missile is devastating as an air-to-air attack weapon or for use on light ground targets. It is infra-red targeted.

HELLFIRES: The Hellfire is a heat-seeking air-to-ground missile designed for taking out tanks and other heavy army. It has a seven kilometre range.

ROCKETS: Folding Fin Aerial Rockets (FFAR) are fitted to the Apache only. They have a very short range (1400 metres maximum) but are useful for low flying attack runs on enemy installations.

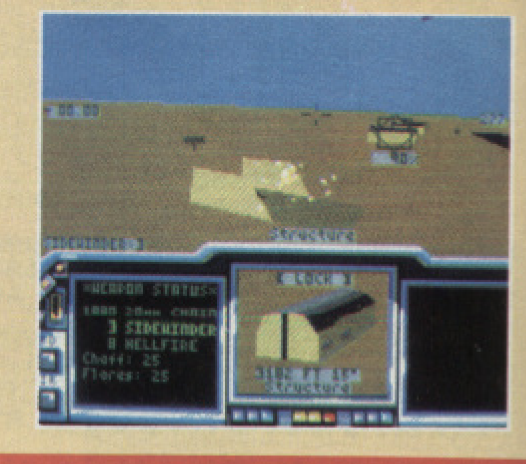
CHESS

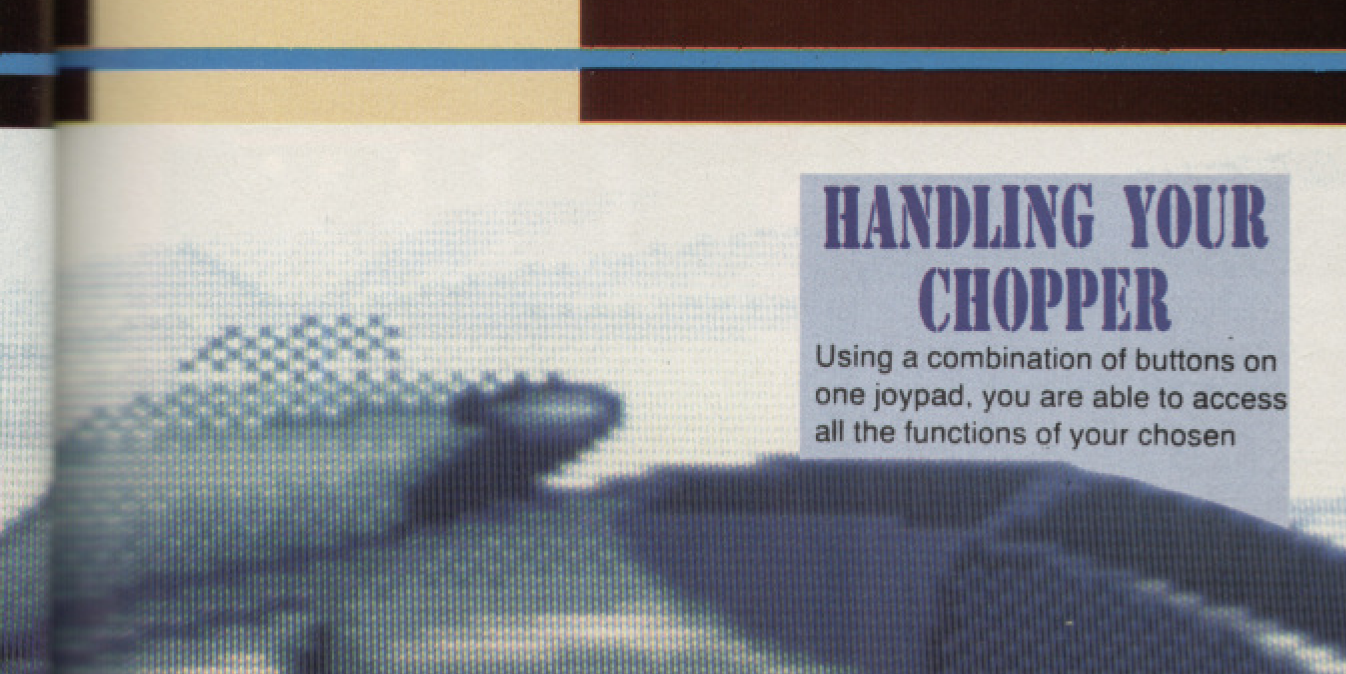
Two objectives for you here. First drop medical supplies for a crew stranded in the desert. Then, on your way back rescue the party that are lost on their way to rescue the first lot!



RAINBOW VEIL

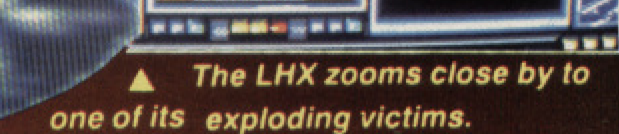
An excellent mission. Intelligence reports that the Libyans have three hostages in one of their horrible "re-education" camps. All three have been told to wait near the camp boundaries where you are to rendezvous. Waste that hell-hole by all means, but watch where you're firing.





HANDLING YOUR CHOPPER

Using a combination of buttons on one joypad, you are able to access all the functions of your chosen helicopter. However, LHX Attack Chopper also has the facility to use another joypad plugged into port two for selecting and firing weapons. Unless you're an ambidextrous type you'll probably find this is best used as a co-pilot option, effectively making it a two-player game!



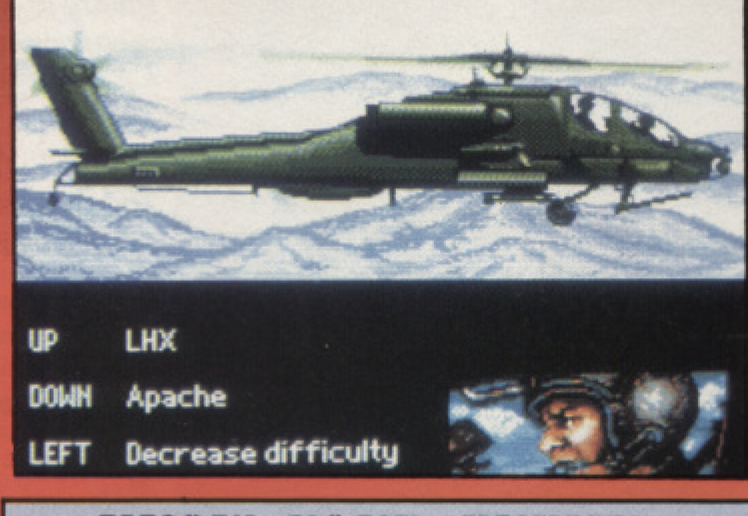
▲ The LHX zooms close by to one of its exploding victims.

DESERT STRIKE

The LHX is selectable to complete any one of over thirty missions, which increase in difficulty as you progress. The campaign zone starts off in the Libyan desert and missions usually involve flying large distances over barren enemy territory to reach the object. At the start of each mission you are given an intelligence report that outlines your task, followed by a weather report and a password code. The code is entered on the start screen enabling the player to return to the start of that mission at any future point. There are a variety of mission-types, not all of which involve blasting the living daylights out of the countryside. Here is a sample of just four missions:

MAJESTIC TWELVE

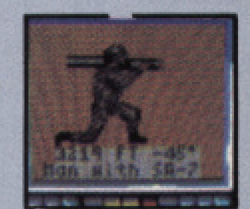
An easy mission to start you off. There's a Libyan armoured group assembling near the front line. Your job is to intercept them and wreak havoc before they get a chance to cause any trouble.



KNOW YOUR ENEMY

You won't know everything that the Libyans have until they start throwing it in your direction, but we have some briefing notes on weaponry they are believed to have stockpiled.

SA-7 GROUND TO AIR MISSILE



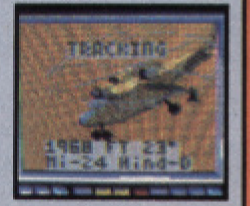
The portable, hand-launched SAMs are a major headache for Allied pilots. The infra-red tracking and wide range makes you vulnerable to them in the clear desert skies.

ZSU-57 AA SYSTEM



Fast, mobile anti-aircraft gun. These are dotted around each of the mission areas in LHX Attack Chopper. Watch out - these are deadly!

MI-24 HIND HELI



The HINDs you'll face are probably modified versions of the anti-tank original. They are certainly fast, but the LHX is faster and more manoeuvrable.

SA-9 GASKIN MISSILE SYSTEM



This baby carries the Gaskin missile - three kilograms of high explosive in your face at Mach 1.5. We think this is at the bottom end of their missile specification...

PHOENIX

This mission presents particular problems because you don't have a precise location for the enemy. The target is a convoy of confiscated currency that the Libyans are trying to move under the cover of night. Intelligence only has the departure and destination points, so a little reconnaissance is required.





INSTRUMENTAL BREAKDOWN



▼ The differing cockpit layouts are ranged round the same navcom.



The cockpit layouts of both choppers are completely different. The Apache has most of the conventional instrumentation you'd expect, but the LHX has the latest computer-driven flight system. Both choppers use the same navigation computer that provides full information on target distance and bearing, and a one mile radar scan system. The navigation computer (navcom) is linked to the target computer which locks your missiles and cannon onto an enemy. It gives you status of the target and provides a close-up picture.

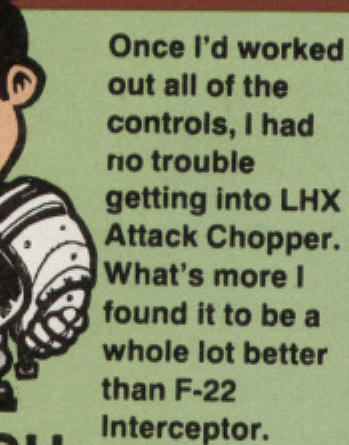
COMMENT



GUS

I must admit it took me a bit of time to get into LHX Attack Chopper. At first it looked like F-22 with the best bits cut out, but with a little perseverance I had to change my mind. The control system is a little tricky, with all the functions so close together and it was inevitable that some of the features of the PC version would be left out. What remains, though, is a damn fine combat game, made all the better for the varied and well thought out missions it offers. My favourite involves rescuing POWs from a remote camp with the ack-ack fire coming from all sides. The challenge of all five skill levels is massive. The idea of altering the viewpoint, which was a bit of a gimmick in F-22 is enhanced considerably here. With a bit of practice you'll soon be seeing yourself strafing a gun emplacement from above and watching it explode from close-range. It loses out to F-22 in some ways, for example the dogfights aren't as ace, but it more than makes up for it in the strategy department. The bottom line is that this is a game which is bound to reward from a little patience and attention. Take a look and see.

COMMENT



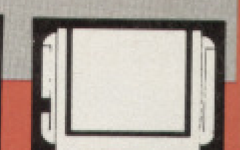
RICH

Once I'd worked out all of the controls, I had no trouble getting into LHX Attack Chopper. What's more I found it to be a whole lot better than F-22 Interceptor. Whereas the latter concentrated on fast, dogfighting action, LHX is a lot more of a tactical game. Each mission requires a good deal of thought and examination of maps in order to progress. Just flying straight in leads to a lead-related death! That's not to say that LHX is devoid of action. Some of the missions are very intense, calling on all your chopper-related abilities in order to escape it one piece. Graphically the game isn't very detailed, but the 3D update is respectable and depicts the action very well. The sound is similarly functional with decent blasting noises and a good chopper effect (the speech sounds a bit suspect though). Electronic Arts hold all the aces when it comes to flight sims. F-22 is perfect for action fans. LHX Attack Chopper comes into its own in terms of realism and depth. Personally, I prefer the latter - a great game for serious Megadrive players.

LHX
ATTACK CHOPPER
BY CHRIS EBERT
LHX: ATTACK CHOPPER (TM) COPYRIGHT 1992 ELECTRONIC ARTS
Licensed by Sega Enterprises Ltd.

BY: EA
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 1
CONTINUES: PASSWORDS
SKILL LEVELS: 5
RESPONSIVENESS: FAIR



PRESENTATION 88%
Plenty of options to wade through and some pleasant static presentation screens.

GRAPHICS 83%
The shaded vector graphics move reasonably fast and the cockpit layout is smart.

SOUND 66%
The effects and speech are atmospheric but sparse.

PLAYABILITY 85%
The complex control system may prove infuriating for beginners but the compulsion to get into the game is high.

LASTABILITY 90%
Persevere and you'll discover a game with plenty of depth and excitement.

OVERALL 89%
A REAL air-combat simulation, LHX Attack Chopper is highly recommended to anyone after a good, lastable game.

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Hook™

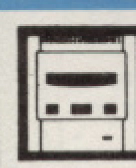
It's a fact of life that, sooner or later, all boys become men. Well most do, except a special few who never grew up - the Lost Boys. These geezers and their leader Peter Pan pursued their adolescent antics on the secluded island of Never-Never Land and enjoyed life to the full... until one day when the evil Captain Hook arrived to press-gang them all as galley slaves and turn the island into a pirate's paradise.

Now, since the UN is occupied elsewhere, it is up to Peter Pan to liberate his homeland alone. Landing on the south shore, Pan follows a route through many sectors teeming with Hook's minions. His destination - Hook's ship, where he meets his nemesis for the final showdown.

To get there our hero is required to jump around the platform environs of the island, ready to jab Hook's scurvy hordes with his trusty, rusty cutlass in the quest for liberation and eternal youth!

HOOKING WITH GAS

At the end of most stages lurks a Hook minion, ensconced in a variety of contraptions. On level two Peter faces a gorilla who has fitted the trees with spring-loaded boxing gloves. Guesswork is required to hit him as he pops out of one of the tree trunks. On a later level the boss launches bombs carried by balloons at our hero, who must drop them on the sender



▼ *Stingy-type deaths are a common problem here.*

▼ *Death by arctic roll awaits our hero.*

▼ *Pete discovers the rare "snow tiger"*

▼ *Something large pops out to bite you.*

to be victorious. Help is also at hand occasionally. When Pan braves the briny on stage four, a chirpy mermaid pops up to stop him dying a drowny sort of death, and on level eight a deadly wandering flame is useful in lighting the gloomy underground corridors filled with pit traps. If the flame goes off screen the lights go out.

PICK 'EM UP DIP

Scattered around the belle-isle of Never-Never land are artifacts for our spritely hero to collect. Here are some of the prizes he could be taking home tonight...

JEWELLERY

Various points bonus are yours if you collect these handy trinkets.

FRUIT



These provide much-needed energy. Cherries replace a unit, Apples fill yer up. Slurp!

FIG LEAF

Biblical underwear for some but a vital energy restoring tonic for our lad.

PANS



Extra Lives mean extra tries when the boy Pan collects these icons.

SWORD





Powers up your blade and increases that all-important kill factor. Ooyah!

TOTAL CONTROL

Pete moves in standard platform fashion, with jump and stab controlled by B and Y buttons respectively. Holding Y allows Pan to trot around faster. But find Tinkerbell and store up the fly energy she endows you with and the next time you jump, another press of the B button gives you levitation. Holding down Y in flight turns Petey into a fully-fledged flyer, allowing you to create some beautiful air ballet. Coo!

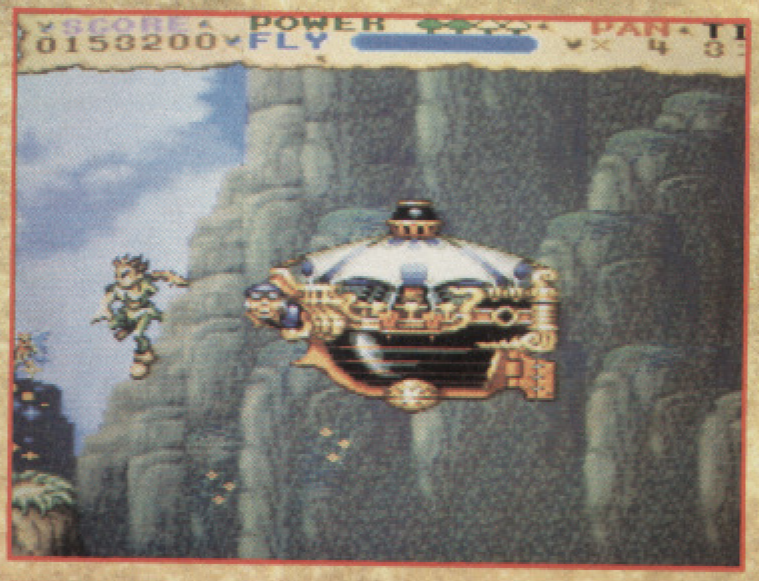




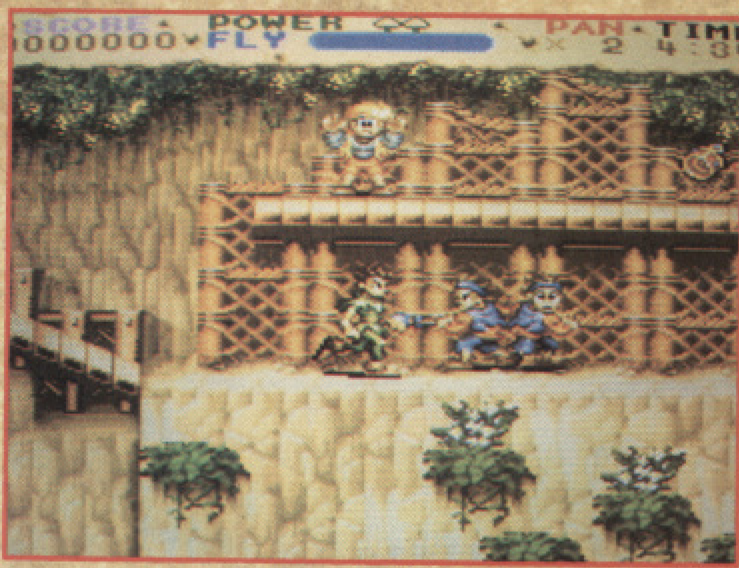
COMMENT



Quality graphics and sound this most certainly has. Challenging gameplay it hasn't. It's just all too easy, and the lack of new things and innovative features means that anyone who's played a couple of platform games before will breeze through this with ease. Given some more interesting bosses, a bit more oomph in the combat department and a few more challenging landscapes to tax your leaping skills, this could have been a winner. It's not, though, and only younger players and beginners will find themselves getting anything out of it.



Pan deals with the "skylark" in end-of-level capers.



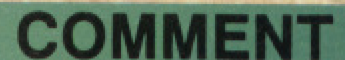
The enemy surrenders on level one.



An armoured balloon carrier launches a broadside.

COMMENT





To be frank, Hook is not an original product. Platform games for the SNES are backlogging at a frightening rate, and, although fun for a while, this hasn't got any features which lift it out of the crowd. To cap it all, it's not really a man's game at all - progress is too rapid. You could find yourself twiddling your thumbs after completing it in not too many days. The bosses would especially be much more entertaining if they were a bit more robust. Most of all, it seems to be severely lacking in the gameplay department. It's a shame to have to say all this, because Hook looks and sounds very nice in places and plays pleasantly. But if it's thrills you're after, leave this as the choice of a younger generation



THANKS TO...

Thanks to the guys at Console Concepts for sending us this game so promptly. If you desire information about this, or any other game, why not give them a call on 0782 712759?

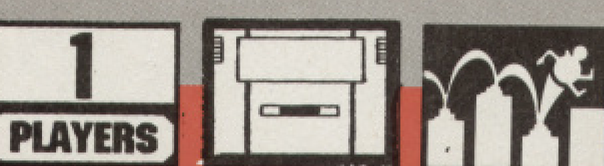


BY: EPIC

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE DATE: IMPORT
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD







PRESENTATION 80%

Your bog standard one-player, one skill level platform game.

GRAPHICS 85%

Cuddly, cutesy and well drawn but nothing eye-opening.

SOUND 83%

There's a fair mix of fanfares and ditties which warble on during the game.

PLAYABILITY 78%

The gameplay never really gets past puberty...

LASTABILITY 70%

...and sadly never-never will. There's simply not enough here to keep you going for more than a few hours.

OVERALL 72%

Graphically and sonically impressive, but the lack of challenge means that the "delights" of Hook are best suited for the young.

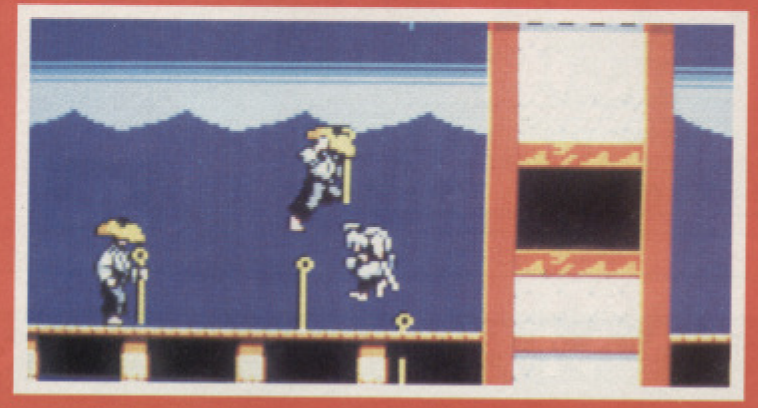
NINJA GAIDEN

Being a Dragon Ninja, Ryu Hayabusa is naturally a man of honour. Imagine his horror and disgust then, when he receives a message telling of a massacre at the Dragon village where he lives. Rushing home he finds his family and friends reduced to kit form! To rub salt into the wide variety of wounds, the sacred Bushido scroll has been stolen. The gang who have seized it now have the opportunity to turn its immense power to evil ends - and conquer the world!

Realising there is no time to lose, Ryu has thrown on his all-in-one black pyjamas and headed straight for the forest to begin the first leg of his journey. Armed with his Dragonsword, Ryu must make his way through eight stages, tackling gunmen, evil Ninjas, birds, bats, and end-of-level guardians. Fortunately for Ryu, there are weapons to collect along the way, like the Shuriken and Super Shuriken, enabling him to kill enemies from a distance. There are even fireballs which home in on the nasties leaving Ryu's hands clean. However, in order to use these weapons plenty of combat points are essential. To gain access to combat points and weapons, Ryu has to cut open scrolls which litter the eight stages. There are bonus points, health restorers and time bonuses to collect as well.

For Ryu to ensure a triumphant conclusion to Ninja Gaiden he must master the many weapons at his disposal, learn how to scale walls, and seize the Bushido back from the evil hands that hold it. Vengeance satisfied and honour restored, Ryu can get out of his all-in-one pyjamas in the hope of sparing himself the reputation as a walking fashion disaster!

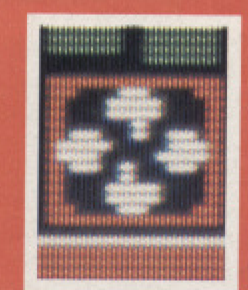




IT'S WEAPONS HOUR!

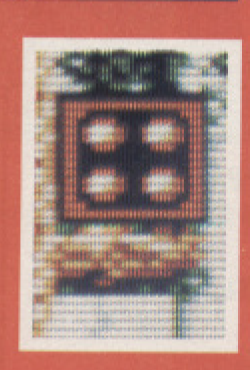
As well as his trusty Dragonsword, there are five different weapons for Ryu to choose. Ryu only has the ability to carry one weapon at a time, but experience dictates what weapon should be used where. The more powerful the weapon is the more combat points it uses up.

FOUR-WAY WHIRLWIND



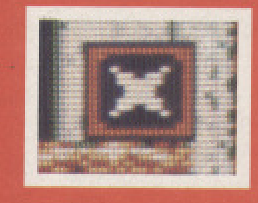
Certainly a weapon you don't see used on the streets of New York! Four mini tornadoes fire up, down, left and right. This means Ryu is able to reach scrolls otherwise unattainable, but this pleasure costs Ryu 20 combat points every time.

FIREBALLS



Great balls of fire! This is handy! Four flaming fireballs are thrown which home in on anything on the screen that threatens Ryu. This weapon proves invaluable in clearing a route of bombs and other objects that could lead to certain death. The privilege costs 40 combat points though.

SHURIKEN



These throwing stars reach any enemy on-screen. Ryu throws them horizontally. Being the weakest weapon it only uses five combat points per star.

SUPER SHURIKEN



This is basically a more powerful version of the ordinary Shuriken, enabling it to inflict more damage. Because of this it uses up ten combat points per star.

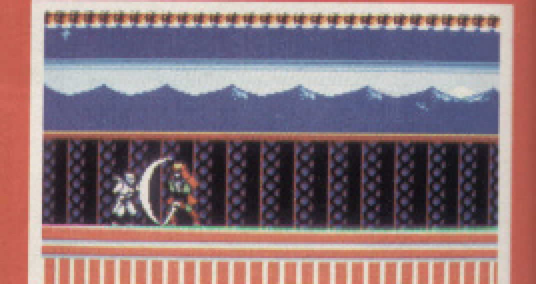
DRAGONFIRE



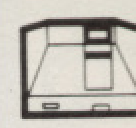
This is the most powerful weapon Ryu can use. The Dragonfire surrounds him with a spinning fireball, making him invincible for a short time, and destroying any enemies that get in the way. It is most effective in places where you might otherwise lose a lot of life. Use sparingly though because it eats up 50 combat points.

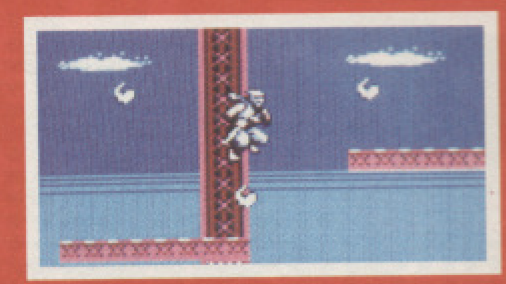


▲ ***Ryu stares in horror at psycho weight watcher!***

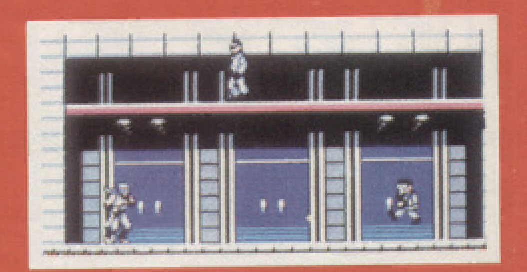


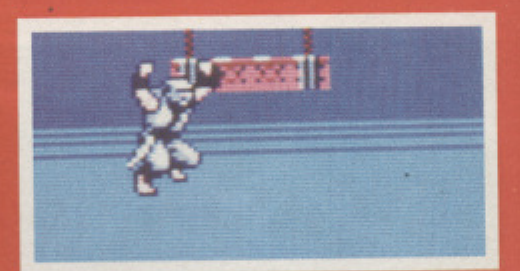
▲ ***The Samurai shows how to make banana shapes with a sword!***











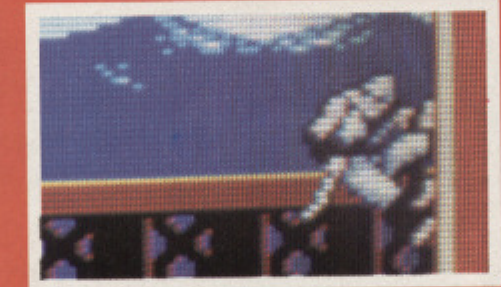
COMMENT

ROB

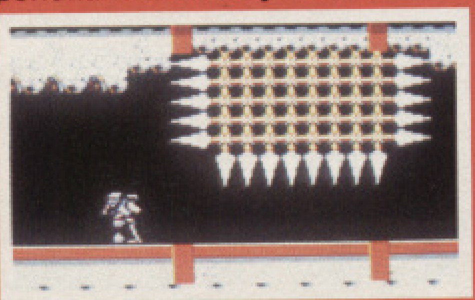
Decent platform games have been a bit scarce on the Master System recently. Apart from Prince of Persia, there has been little else. Fortunately, Ninja Gaiden more than makes up for the relapse. It boasts excellent graphics, full of colour, with a detailed attention to backdrops. I was also impressed by the animation which, like Prince of Persia, manages to fulfill its potential. The controls are responsive (perhaps a little too responsive at times) making the gameplay easy to get into, and largely free of frustration. On occasions my suspicions were aroused about the collision detection, but it is rare enough to be hardly noticeable, and doesn't really effect your enjoyment of the game. The range of weapons and moves give the game a variety that keeps it interesting, and I kept coming back to experiment with new weapons to find out which worked best and where. This addictive quality is fueled by the large size of the game which means it won't be a one day push over. While Ninja Gaiden doesn't have much in the way of new ideas, it does prove very successful with the old ones, and it's this fact that makes it a game well worth a look.

KABEKERI CAPERS

Before confusion sets in, the "kabekeri" is an ancient Ninja technique which enables a warrior to scale walls! While the ghostly figure of Jimmy Hill might be appearing, it is worth mentioning that Ryu needs two walls facing each other to achieve this feat. Springing quickly from one to the other sends him upwards. But don't hesitate when in mid swing because Ryu falls, and the whole process must be repeated.

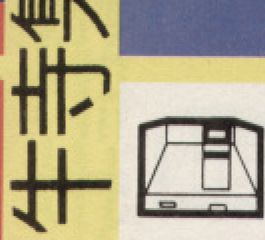


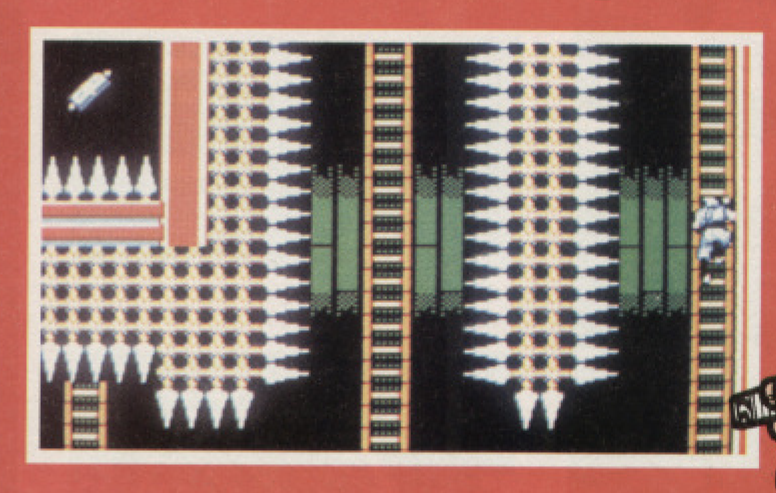
▲ *Ryu lives to regret his penchant for sticky buns.*

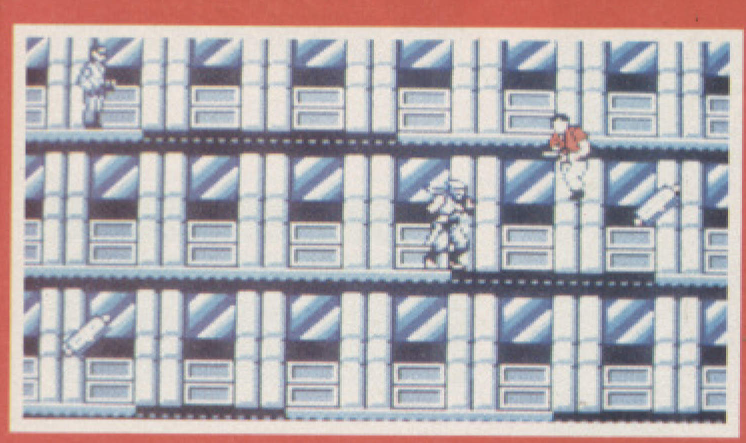


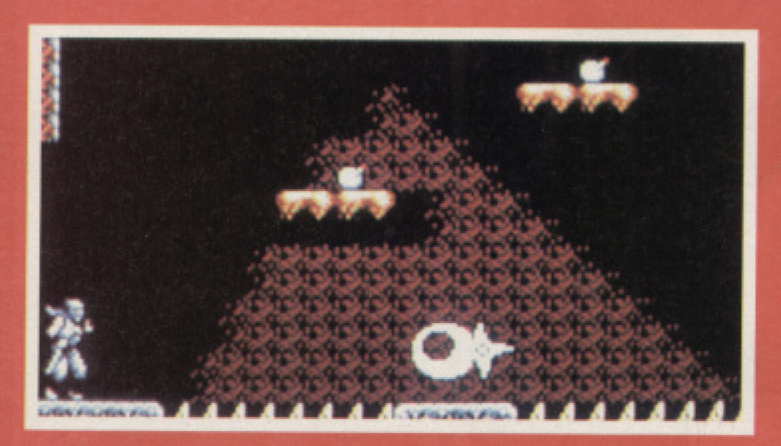
▲ *Loads of potential pricks here!*

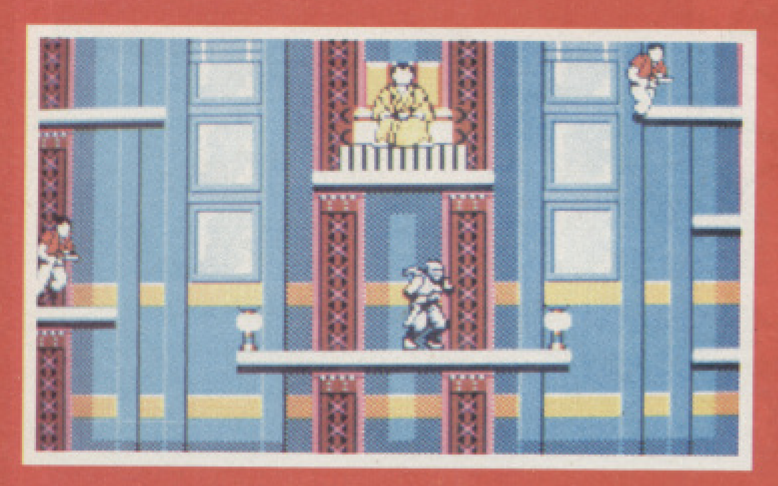












ADVICE SHOP

Ryu's search for Bushido takes him through eight stages of increasing difficulty. At the end of each he comes face to face with one of the games bosses. Here's where the special weapons come in particularly handy. The fireballs tend to do the best job. By getting in a few early blows without suffering any hits, Ryu has an immediate advantage. Before going into a boss make sure you've got plenty of combat points though! It is worth learning a technique using the sword as well because Ryu tends run out of combat points before the battle is up.



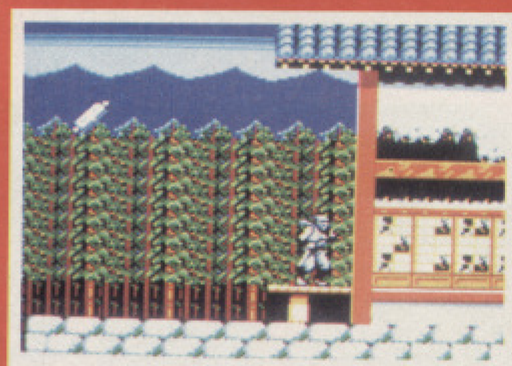
▲ *"Russell Grant? Never heard of you fatso!"*

COMMENT



RICH

I must admit that there haven't been many games of late that have caused me to power up the old Master System for a quick play. Domark's Prince of Persia was one exception, and this game is the other. Ninja Gaiden has loads of appeal. The graphics are excellent (sometimes rivalling Megadrive visuals, believe it or not) and the scrolling is super-smooth. The speed of the game is also quite remarkable, it really moves at a fast and hectic pace, making for some great play. Perhaps the game is a little easy in places, but it's just so good to play that even after you've completed it, you'll be coming back for more. The selection of weapons adds even more variety to the proceedings. Ninja Gaiden is a great slash 'em up, essential for Master System owners.



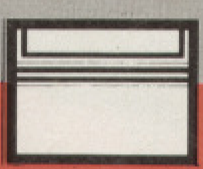


▲ *Ryu prepares for an assault on a sofware house.*



BY: SEGA
PRICE: £32.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD







PRESENTATION 78%

The heart-rending story starts the game, but there are no options to speak of.

GRAPHICS 87%

Some excellent graphics, with well drawn and animated sprites and detailed backdrops.

SOUND 60%

Sound effects are a bit weedy. The oriental sing-along starts to grate after a while.

PLAYABILITY 80%

The controls are responsive and the in-game logic is good. Poor collision detection on occasions.

LASTABILITY 86%

The size of the game and the variety of weapons and moves mean there is plenty of challenge.

OVERALL 83%

Not particularly original, but wholly enjoyable game which succeeds in all aspects of the genre.

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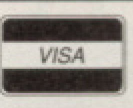
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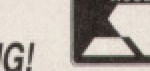
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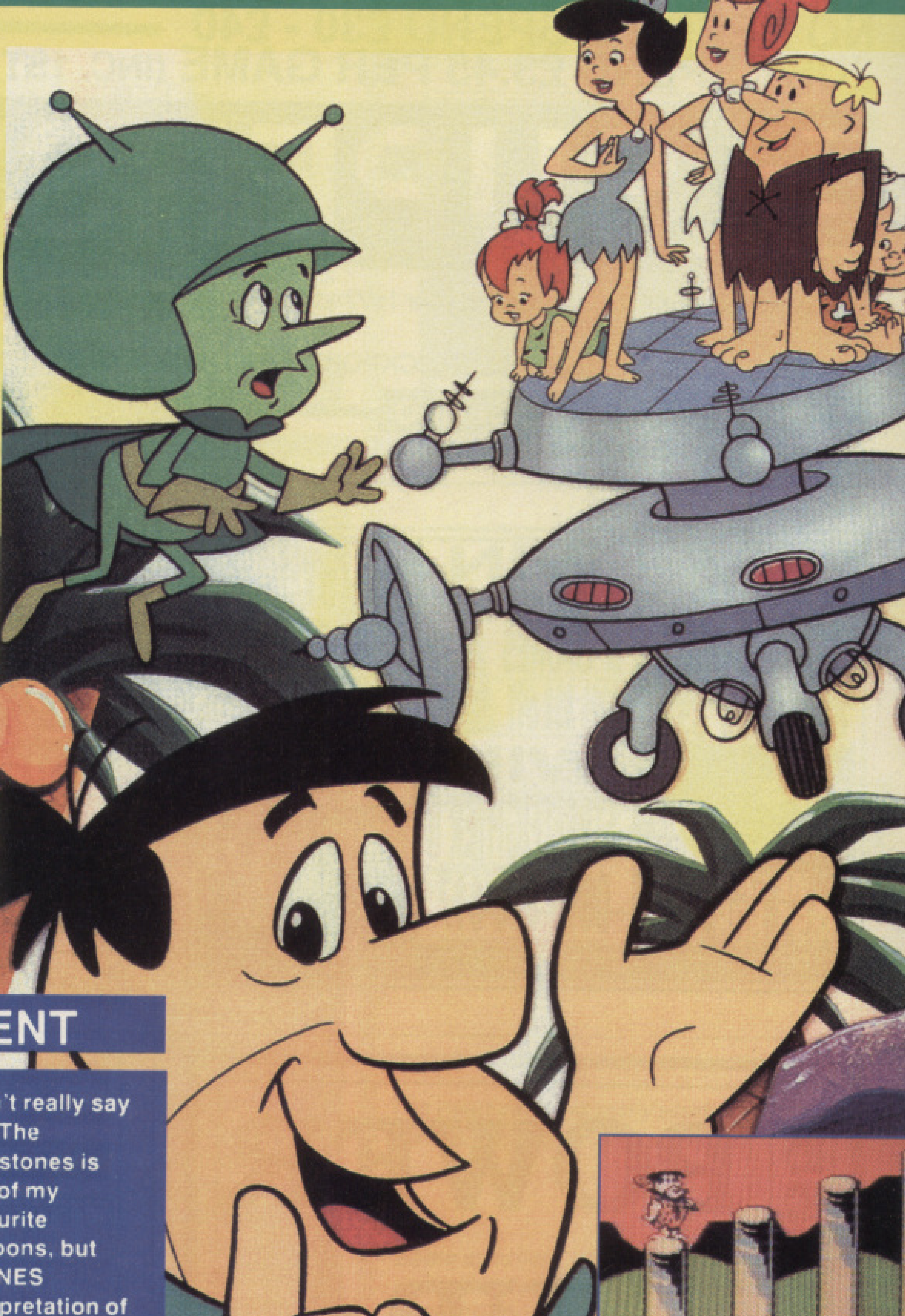
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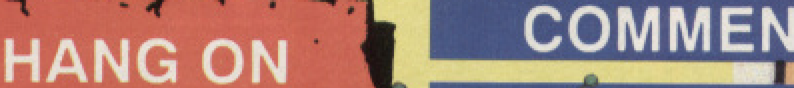
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Darwin's theory of evolution expresses the belief that pre-historic man was a bi-ped capable of using his hands to carve intricate hunting tools. Unfortunately ol' Charlie was completely wrong, as is made plainly obvious by the existence of Fred Flintstone. While Fred doesn't have a neck, he does have a job, a car, a wife, a bowling partner and a house in the suburbs of Bedrock.

But the pleasant mayhem of the Flintstones' existence is ruined when a certain Dr Butler appears in a time machine. After explaining he is a 30th Century zoo keeper, he whips away Dino and Hoppy, the beloved family pets. Gazoo, Fred's alien buddy, is just about to rev up his time machine in pursuit when Dr Butler destroys it, scattering the parts all over Bedrock county.

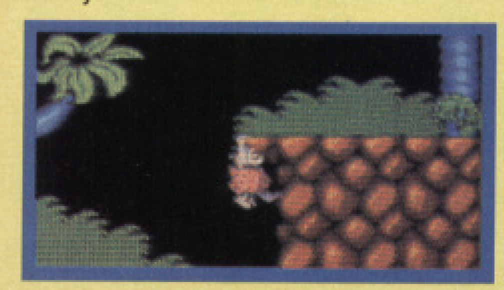
Sad isn't it? Well before you start blubbing over your NES, there is hope. Fred has been assigned the job of hunting for the scattered parts of the time machine. With the aid of his trusty club and the Flintstones clan, Fred has to make his way through jungles, past gangsters, and across waterways to hunt down the valuable shrapnel. He even has to challenge villains to basketball matches on his quest! But when Dino and Hoppy are safely back in suburban Bedrock, the family that laughed in the face of Dr Darwin, can laugh even louder in the face of Dr Butler. YABBADABBADOO!

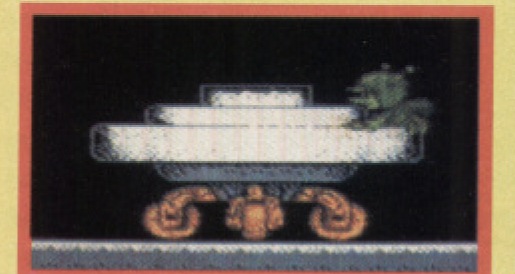




HANG ON IN THERE

As you might expect of a prehistoric man, Fred is fighting fit. Not only can he leap and run, he can also hang. If Fred wants to reach a platform above him he is able to crawl up using his chunky arms. The same principle follows when the athletic apeman can't make a jump. Rather than fall to his death, by grabbing the edge of the platform Fred scrambles to safety!



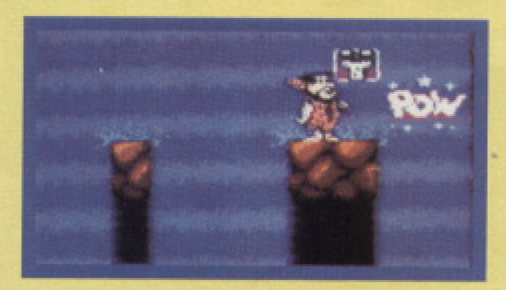


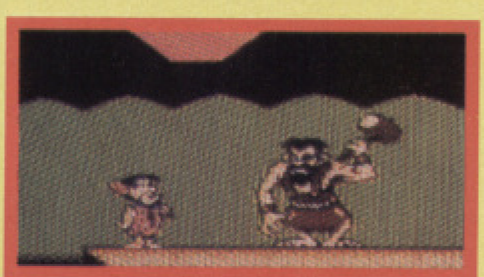
▲ *Gazoo reconstructs the time machine.*

COMMENT

RICH

I can't really say that The Flintstones is one of my favourite cartoons, but this NES interpretation of Fred's various antics isn't bad at all. The backdrops and sprites are instantly reminiscent of the Hanna Barbera cartoon series, and the various creatures and large dinosaurs are all as faithful as you'll get. Gameplay-wise, the Flintstones is pretty standard fare. It's yet another platform game and I couldn't really find anything new or outstanding in it that really makes the game feel fresh or exciting. Having said that, The Flintstones isn't an awful example of the genre and will appeal to younger players and fans of the cartoon series. However, if it's platform action you're after, you're better off getting Super Mario III, Shadow Warrior, Kabuki or Rescue Rangers. All offer far more in the way of playability than this effort.







▲ *Fred forgets to feed the family pet.*

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Although Fred's leopard skin all-in-one doesn't frighten off enemies, some of his fighting tools do. The trusty club stays with Fred at all times. It is particularly good at bashing enemies coming head on for a straight fight. Some are more cunning however, and shoot at Fred with their pop guns. For foes such as these, Fred needs to get his hands on the catapult. With his impeccable aiming abilities, Fred can take baddies out from a distance. For those that assault from above Fred needs the axe, this travels in an arc and is also good at killing enemies at a distance.





▲ *Basketball with big mouth big bird.*

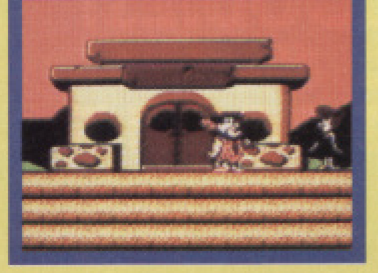
COMMENT



ROB

During my mis-spent youth, I was an avid fan of The Flintstones. It is to this game's credit that it succeeded in bring the memories flooding back. The animation and graphics certainly evoke the "modern stone age family", what with dinosaurs bones, prehistoric backdrops, and the familiar heroes and villains. Unfortunately the gameplay comes straight from the stone age as well. The controls are sometimes slow to respond getting you into some tricky situations, and the game suffers from quite a lot of sprite flicker. These problems in themselves need not let the game down, but the lack of originality here, relegates this to just another NES platform game to add to the ever growing pile. The Flintstones is also quite an easy game, and no real challenge to platform fiends. Despite my gripes, although I quite enjoyed playing The Flintstones, I'm afraid you won't get a "Yabbadabbadoo!" out of me!





▲ *Barney and Wilma grind Fred's stone age nuts.*

BARREL OF FUN

During his journeys Fred comes across many barrels. Should he set about one with his club it opens up revealing a useful item. Standard prehistoric grub like burgers and popcorn helps to raise his life gauge. A heart brings Fred back to full life, and the axe and catapult prove handy in disposing of enemies.

GREEN AND FRIENDLY

Despite having his spaceship destroyed by the evil Dr Butler, Gazoo is still ready to lend Fred a hand at various stages in the game. When Fred wants to get to some barrels but can't jump high enough, he has the chance to call on the friendly little alien by pressing start. Gazoo pops up and gives Fred a couple of options. There are other situations in which he manages to save the racking of brains so don't forget he's there!

ADVICE CORNER

When Fred has almost managed to complete a stage, one of his friends suddenly appears. They give Fred some useful advice about a boss he is approaching. They may even pass on a weapon that helps him to beat the boss. Flintstones fans will notice that for some strange reason Barney has dyed his hair brown!

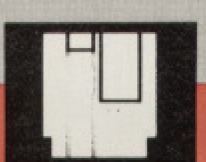


BY: TAITO

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: NOT BAD







PRESENTATION 77%

Title screens tell the tale and set the scene. There is a continue option for those who need it.

GRAPHICS 79%

Characters look just like those in the cartoon, and the animation reinforces this style of approach.

SOUND 54%

The Flintstones tune is there, but it sounds like it's being strangled. Not many sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 73%

The controls are a bit slow to respond at times, and collision detection is dodgy on occassions.

LASTABILITY 70%

There are quite a few stages, and plenty to look for but the gameplay isn't challenging enough.

OVERALL 74%

A pretty good example of the NES platform game (as most of them are), but let down largely by a lack of originality and challenge.

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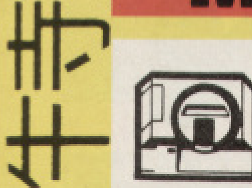
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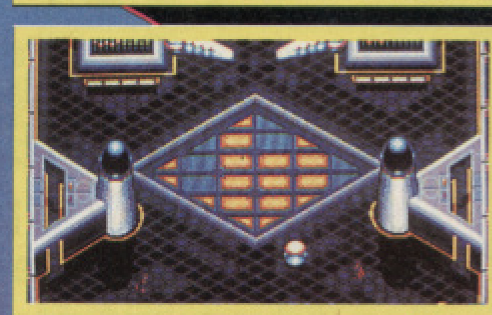


It's a tragic tale but true. That lovable dolphin, Flipper, star of the much admired sixties TV series, has gone barking mad. During filming in the Pacific, for a Christmas special edition of the show, he begins to suffer horrendous Vietnam flashbacks. These traumatic hallucinations drive him to a decision - he must go back! In Twisted Flipper, the player guides the dynamic dolphin on a return mission deep into enemy territory. Only by saving the PoW's still held in a Saigon prison, shall Flipper be cured of the disease twisting his mind...

...On the other hand, that could all be complete rubbish, fabricated to carry out a cheap pun on the game's title. Twisted Flipper is in fact a pinball game! The flippers in this game have nothing to do with sea-faring mammals. Instead players fire up a silver ball and use a mixture of skill and intuition to amass as many points as possible.

Twisted Flipper manages to fit a vast pinball table into the cramped confines of the Megadrive. There are three sets of flippers to work with, but falling through the lowest set loses the ball. Mutant skulls and runaway brains do their best to make proceedings more hazardous, and diverting tasks present new ways to get at the points. All good pinball games have a two-player option, but Twisted Flipper actually takes it a step further and has a four-player option, something which is bound to lead to plenty of cursing, boasting and sulking. Just don't expect any dolphins, ok?!

TWISTED FLIPPE

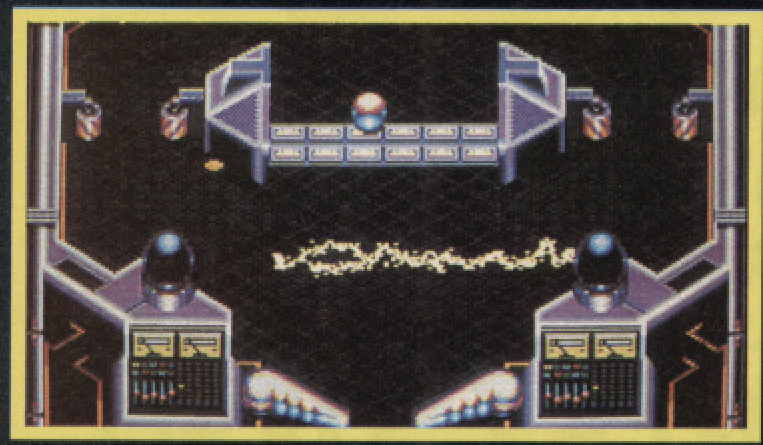


POINTY! POINTY!

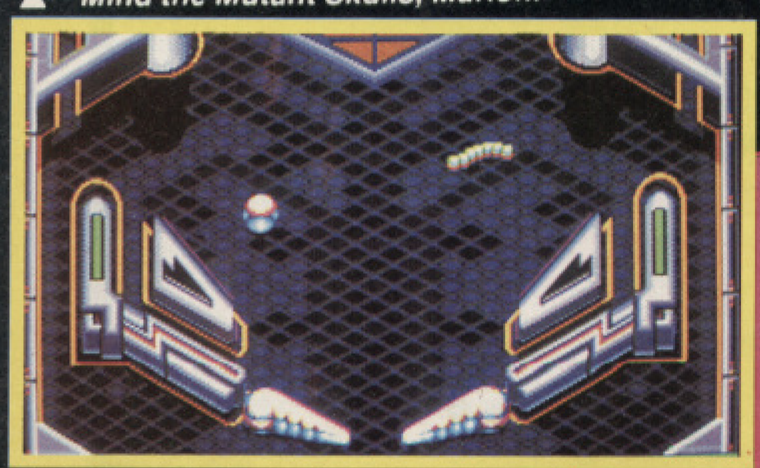
In pinball points are the name of the game, and Twisted Flipper naturally includes some bonus features giving the player a chance to score extra points. The most common is the Jump Ramp, although there are other less accessible bonus screens. With the Jump Ramp, players have to carry out a sequence of tasks involving destroying blocks, lighting the diamond, and knocking down all of the letters in the words "Jump Ramp". Then the ramp appears and the next task is to launch the ball over it. If successful, the silver ball flies off the table and into space and finally settles on a bonus screen. Good e

DEEPLY FLIPPY

As has already been mentioned, there are three sets of flippers to work with in this game. Here's a quick summary of what to expect from each area of the table:



▲ *Mind the Mutant Skulls, Marlon.*



▲ *All centipede scum must die!*



MIDDLE FLIPPERS

In the table's middle section, skulls in green wigs, wearing sandals, waddle around the screen. Statue figureheads also appear, and when broken their brains escape and go walkabout. The pylons to the left and right of the flippers shoot lightning when the ball bounces against them enough times. It is the middle section that holds the key to gaining access to the upper flippers. The cards that appear displaying words like HEAD and BANGER (?) must all be knocked down. Only then does the block preventing the ball from getting to the upper flippers, de-activate. Hoorah!

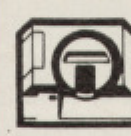


BASE FLIPPERS

These flippers are the last protection on the table. If the ball falls through these, it is lost forever - caution is therefore the watchword! Most of the action takes place in this area though, and it is here that you'll find the Jump Ramp bonus level. Look out for caterpillars which wiggle across the screen as well.

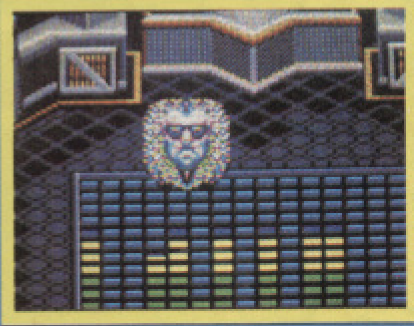
UPPER FLIPPERS

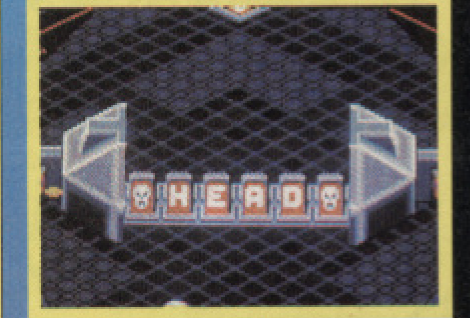
This is a much smaller area of the table, and thus more frantic with the ball rebounding ferociously in the confined space. The head of a soft-rock fiend then starts to levitate above the flippers. His blonde permed hair and shades are no doubt designed to put players off, but those who are able to withstand the fashion travesty staring them in the face have to try and break down the gate he is protecting.



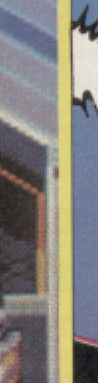



Out of its skull!


Never trust a hippie.


The word "head".







COMMENT

ROB

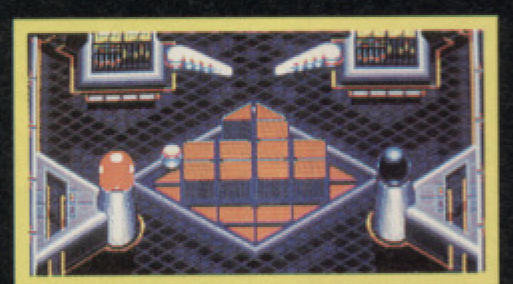
For those of you contemplating buying a pinball sim, the thing you probably want to know is whether or not this is better than Dragon's Fury. In the playability department things are pretty even. The inertia of the ball is very realistic, and there are no quirks in the game logic that cause the ball to rebound at strange angles. The sound too, matches the classic rock opera of Dragon's Fury with wild guitar solo's a-plenty. But I'm afraid it's at this point that Dragon's Fury leaves its rival behind. Basically Twisted Flipper lacks the variety necessary to make a pinball sim interesting - there just isn't enough going on. While a few sprites move about the screen, most of the graphics are static and short on detail. Bonus screens, which work wonders in Dragon's Fury are few and far between in this game. While the Jump Ramp bonus level is an impressive idea it is generally the only extra level that turns up regularly. The four-player mode opens up the door for some multi-player fun, but the actual pinball action is just too dull to keep anyone interested for long. So in answer to the opening question, I'd say that although Twisted Flipper has some okay pinball action, it's beaten hands down by Dragon's Fury.

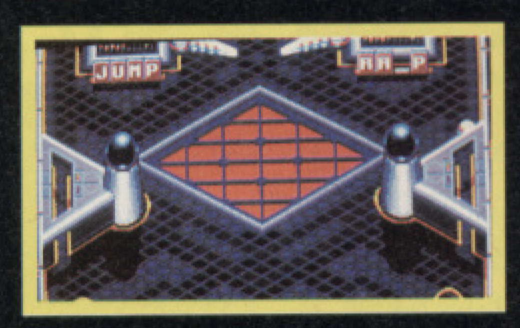
COMMENT



JULIAN

Being a keen pinball fan, I really wanted to enjoy this game. But try as I might, the more I played, the more I got bored. The problem is that the challenge level is too low - the collision detection on the flippers is too forgiving and it's all too easy to keep the ball in play. Consequently it doesn't take long to get to a level where games go on for ages at a time, and it all becomes a matter of routine. This is compounded by the fact that there's not enough happening on the table to keep your interest going between bonus screens - the amount of drop targets and trick shots is actually very limited. The graphics and sound are very slick, and the ball movement is fairly realistic (although I found its movement a bit too "heavy", as if the table was tilted forward too far), but my vote goes for Dragon's Fury - it has more variety and is more challenging.






Target-related tomfoolery.



BY: EA
PRICE: £44.95
RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY
LIVES: 4
CONTINUES: NONE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD







PRESENTATION 75%
Two, three, and even four-player action, but little else besides. Sad title screen as well.

GRAPHICS 72%
Some nicely drawn and animated sprites, but not enough of them.

SOUND 85%
Some air punching, soft rock riffs and decent bing-bong pinball sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 86%
The pinball "feel" is successfully reproduced, which means its easy to get into.

LASTABILITY 70%
The absence of enough bonus screens means monotony soon starts to set in.

OVERALL 74%
A realistic pinball sim that doesn't offer enough challenge or variety. Dragon's Fury is a better alternative.

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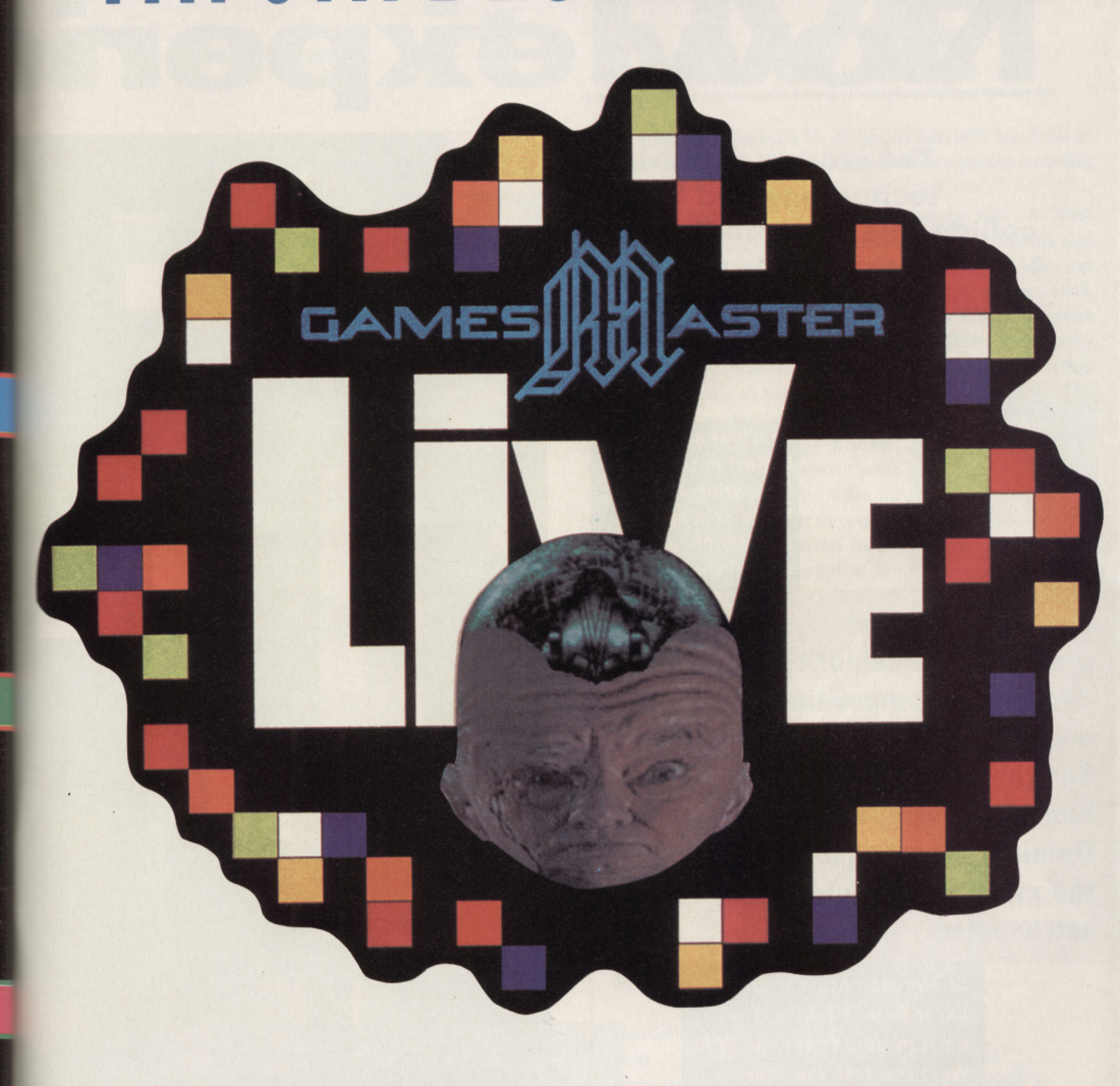


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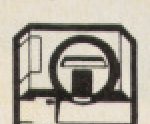
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REVIEW

THUNDER FORCE IV

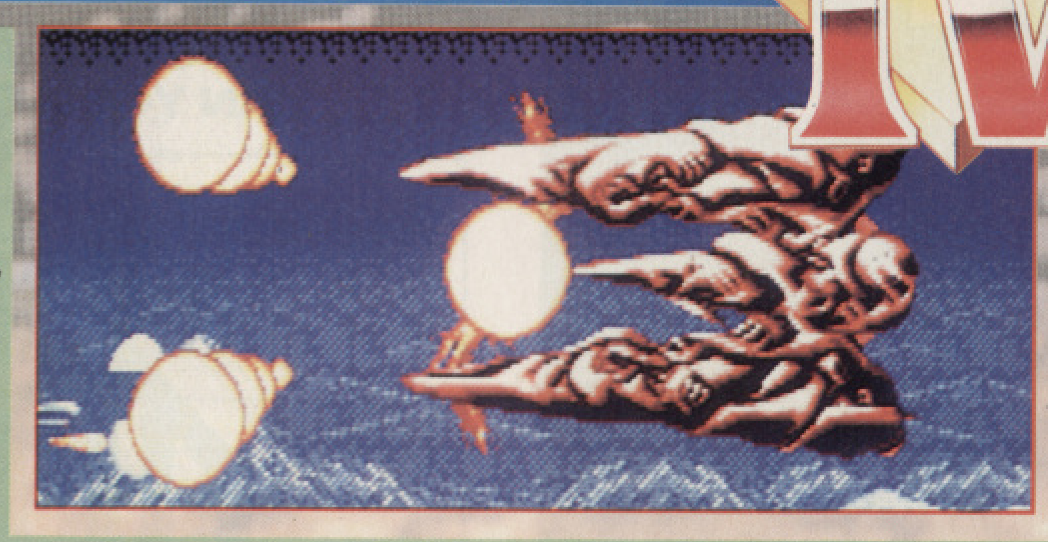
サンダーフォースIV

So here it is, Thunderforce IV! All of those souls left blubbing for more after completing the third episode in the on-going galactic saga can at last throw away their Kleenex and get back to some furious shoot em' up action. It is two years since the devastating battle of Thunderforce III and the Ohn Empire are on the move again, plotting the extinction of all human life. So once more it's down to the ever-faithful Thunderforce pilots to save the world, the universe and everything.

There are quite a few differences between this new edition and its predecessors. Where II and III were four megabit carts, Thunderforce IV is eight. This means there are more levels and more weapons. The parallax scrolling has also entered new realms, with the shoot em' up fun going higher and lower than the screen itself. Following in the best traditions of the genre, there are no end of weird alien spacecraft to destroy, no end of bosses to overcome, and no end of power-ups to collect! Belt up and blast off! Here we go!



An end-of-level boss makes things tough for the Rynex.



A psychotic K9 comes under attack.

WEAPON HEAVEN



That's what everyone loves about a shoot em' up; GUNS! LOADS OF THE BLIGHTERS! Fortunately, Technosoft have maintained this tradition, and Thunderforce IV has plenty of power ups for you to collect. Some are pretty much the same as those in Thunderforce III, but most are modified versions. And here they are:

FREE WAY

When things ahead start getting congested it's time to use the Free Way! Missiles fire diagonally up and down, and straight ahead, and in both horizontal directions to clear a route for the ship. Collectively the missiles make a formidable weapon.



CLAW

One of the most useful items to pick up, the claw revolves around the ship and multiplies the amount of firing ports, allowing the ship to enter further realms of alien dusting!



HUNTER

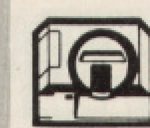
An old favourite, and very handy to boot! The hunter weapons are heat-seekers that are drawn to on-screen enemies. They're not the most powerful of weapons but are excellent when the ship is taking attacks from all sides.



SNAKE

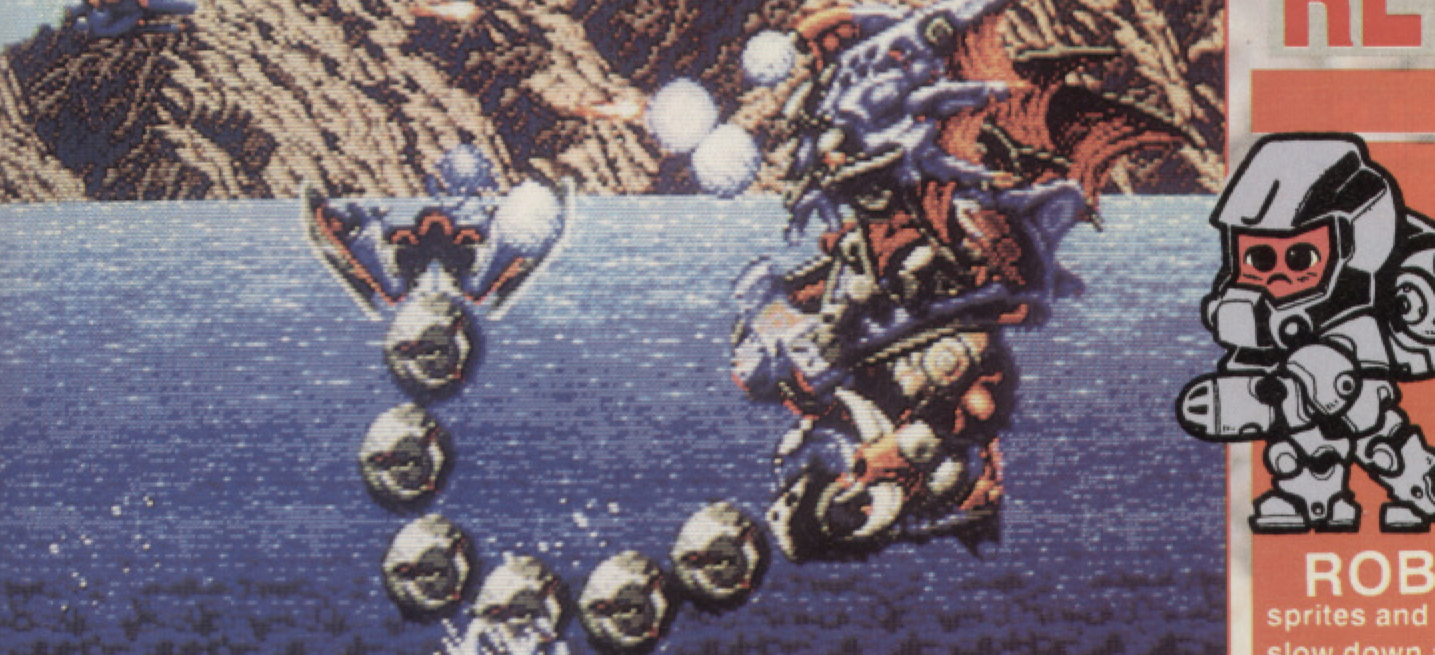
This weapon does as it says and snakes along the roof and base of the screen destroying static canons and bombs, which otherwise tend to cause extreme havoc and confusion.





REVIEW





▲ *The galliant pilots tackle a mechanical sea monster.*

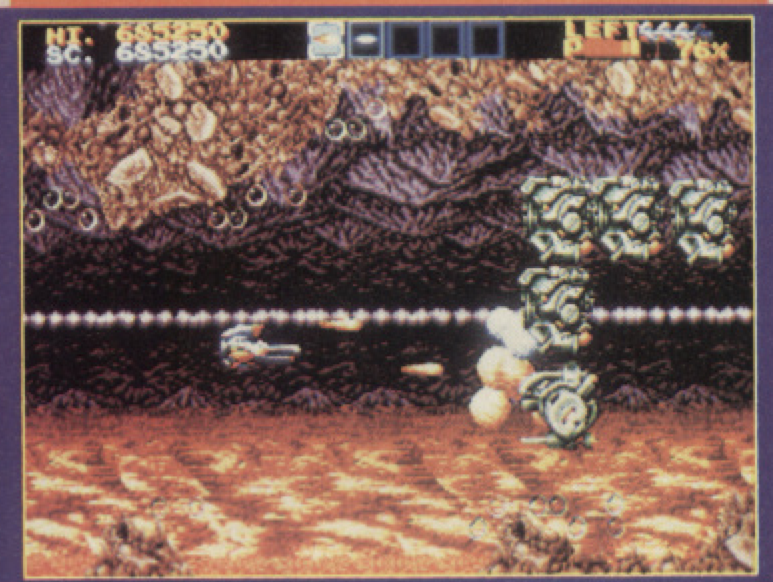
COMMENT

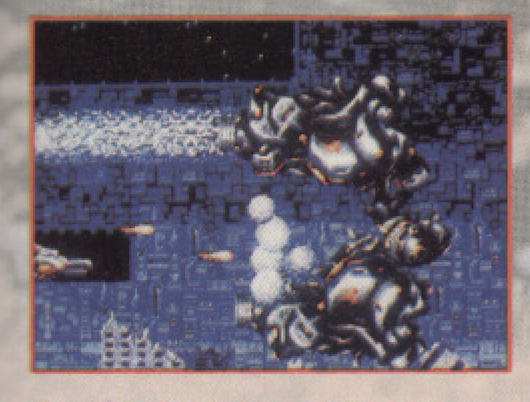
ROB

I know what you're thinking! Is it better than Thunderforce III? Well, to put your worries at rest, it is. The real question is how much better? Here the answer is less definite. The graphics are state of the art, with plenty of minutely detailed sprites, some breathtaking backdrops, and stunning weapon presentation. The animation is fast and smooth, and there is so much of it, what with hordes of attacking sprites and weapons, that the game suffers from slow down at times. Despite this, the game still plays as well as its predecessors, and the method of control is just as easy to get into. The most impressive feature though was the vertical scrolling, which succeeds in evoking a sense of vastness. As well as that, it is the only complete departure from Thunderforce III, and that prompts my only criticism of the game; originality, or rather the lack of it. In spite of its superb graphics and gameplay, there is nothing especially unique in this game. While it is visually a new experience, conceptually it is isn't. I suppose you could call it a Thunderforce III re-spray. Obviously for those who haven't got the third one, this is the best you'll get on the Megadrive currently. But for those who have, I can't help thinking they ought to wait for something a bit different before they part with their cash.

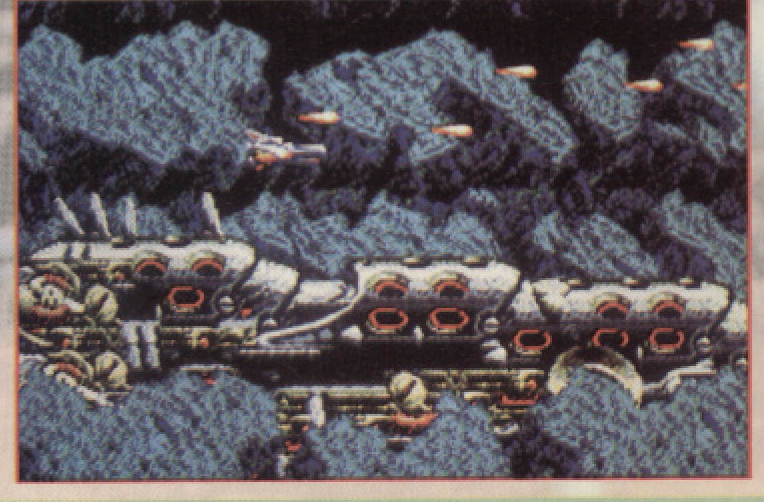
THE BIG SCREEN

In Thunderforce IV there's loads of scrolling fun to enjoy, because the space in which the Rynex moves isn't restricted to the top and bottom of the screen. The game scrolls up and down to reveal a massive playfield, packed full of enemies. Remember where power-ups are though, because they won't always be visible on the screen.





▲ *Some serious fire power on the Ruin level.*



RAILGUN

Basically this is a really thick laser, and thus proves very powerful. Like the Back Shot, it fires from the rear, and quickly does away with enemies sneaking up from behind.



BLADE

This weapon looks a lot like a weird boomerang, although fortunately it doesn't come back at you! Not short in the power department, but it only fires at enemies coming head-on.



BACK SHOT

Again this is a weapon familiar to all three Thunderforce games. As its name so obviously suggests, this power up covers the ship's back as well as the front. Like the Twin Shot it is okay for starters, but becomes less effective with the bigger fish.



TWIN SHOT

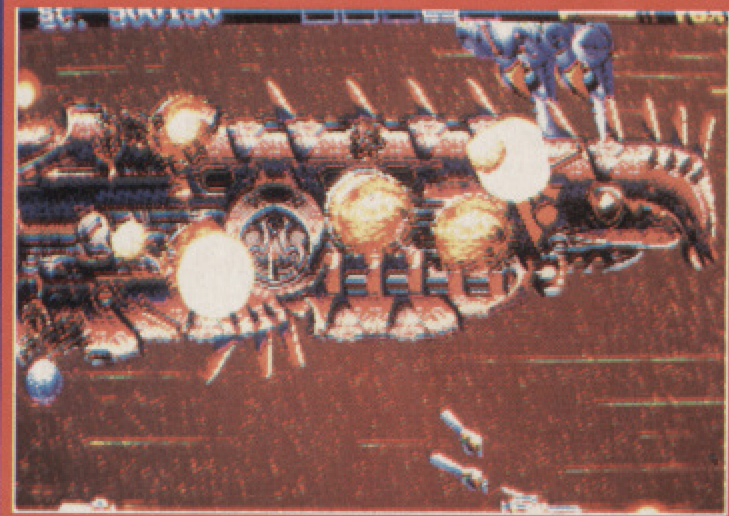
This is the standard firing weapon that the ship starts with, and is common to all of the Thunderforce games. You might get by on it at first, but it soon becomes about as useful as a barber shop on the steps of the guillotine when things start hotting up!



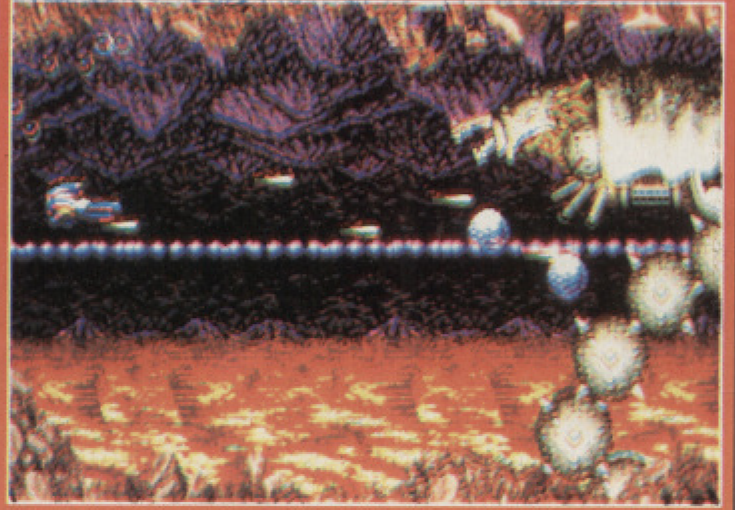


REVEL IN LEVELS

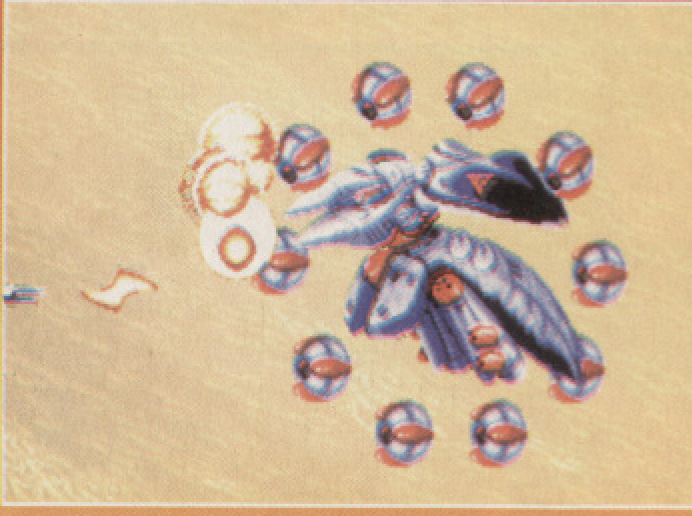
Because Thunderforce IV is eight megabit rather than four, there are more levels to tackle. The first four stages (Strite, Air-raid, Daser, Ruin) are selectable as starting points, but after this every stage must be tackled, and that means making sure you've got plenty of lives, power ups and, most of all, plenty of wits!



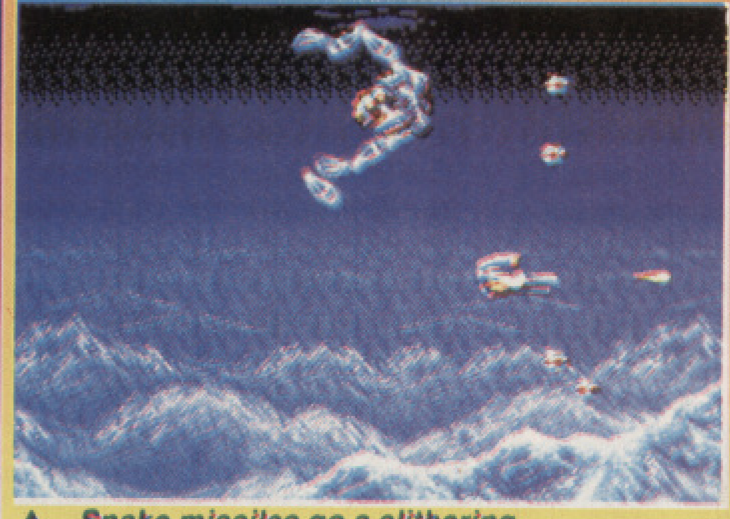
▲ *The Rynex utilises its Free Way missiles.*



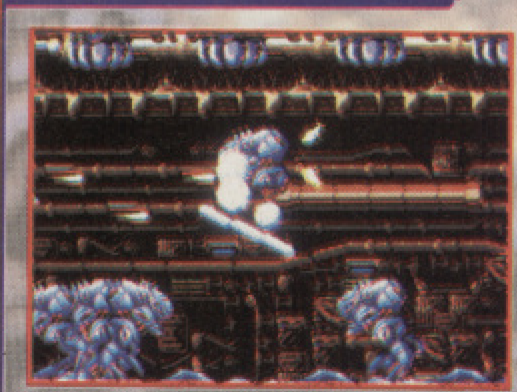
▲ *"I say, this chap looks rather miffed!"*



▲ *Juggling can be fun, kids!*

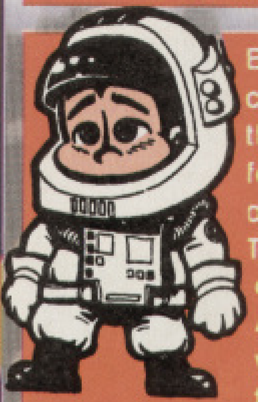


▲ *Snake missiles go a slithering.*





COMMENT



JULIAN

Brilliant and challenging though it is, I found the lack of originality in Thunderforce IV a disappointment. Apart from the wider playfield, this is very much a traditional horizontally scrolling blaster where you simply shoot the baddies, pick up the power-ups and take out the end-of-level bosses. Even the weapons offer nothing new. Admittedly, the graphics and sounds are excellent, but the game basically boils down to being the same old shoot 'em up format taken to its extreme. I certainly enjoyed playing it, but because there wasn't anything new there I found that once I'd seen all the levels I didn't want to play it again. Thunderforce IV is definitely one of the most challenging and visually appealing blasters yet seen on the Megadrive, but to be honest I'd only buy it if I didn't have many horizontally scrolling shoot 'em ups in my collection.

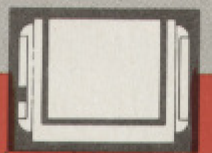


BY: TECHNOSOFT

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE DATE: IMPORT
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 5
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD







PRESENTATION 87%

Nice title screen intro and most of the regular options. No password system though.

GRAPHICS 93%

Superb state-of-the-art graphics, brilliantly drawn and coloured. No complaints with the animation either.

SOUND 86%

The blast effects are cool, but the jazzy tunes, while good, aren't wholly appropriate!

PLAYABILITY 90%

Really easy to get into. The game is responsively fast, as it needs to be.

LASTABILITY 82%

The level of challenge and the number of levels means it is certainly no pushover.

OVERALL 87%

The best shoot em' up you'll get on the Megadrive, but suffers from a complete lack of originality. This is the genre taken to its extreme.

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NEW GAME PREVIEW

HOT CONSOLE GAMES COMING SOON...HOT CONSOLE GAMES COMING SOON...

ATOMIC RUNNER

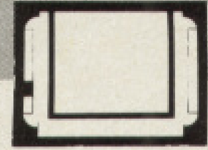
Coming soon, to charge around Megadrives everywhere will be Atomic Runner, alias Chelnov, from Data East.
You play Chelnov, the son of an incredible scientist, who finds himself launched into the realms of a nightmare, battling against an alien invasion. Unfortunately your father is killed in the melee, but before he croaks he describes to you the awful truth that is your only hope. Apparently this marauding force had been to Earth thousands of years ago and could be traced back to before even the dawn of mankind.
However, being an all-round hero, you're able to combat the alien menace across many levels of scrolling blast 'em up chaos. From what we've seen already Atomic Runner has some of the best graphics yet seen on the Megadrive with pulse-racingly superb music to match. Look out for Atomic Runner in your favourite games emporium and check out MEAN MACHINES for the full review!





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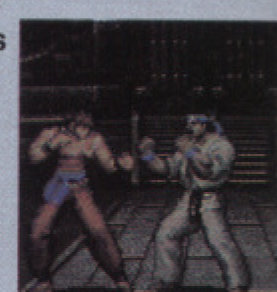




GOLDEN FIGHTER

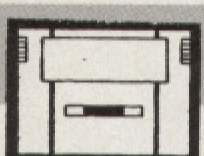
Just when you thought the last punch had been thrown on the Super NES, Culture Brain release Golden Fighter. It's a twelve megabit cart containing plenty of fist frivolity. There's the chance to enter one-on-one competitions, where players can either fight each other or the computer, or alternatively play in a Double Dragon style beat em' up with all of the diversions it entails.
In the one-on-one mode there are a whole series of moves to master, and a challenging tournament to enter. Players choose from a variety of combat forms like karate, boxing, Thai boxing, wrestling and street fighting. Each opponent has a standard set of moves as well as some specialist individual ones. Golden Fighter looks pretty good, but things are a tad shaky in the playability department. Read the full review in an up-coming edition of the all-new NINTENDO MAGAZINE SYSTEM.

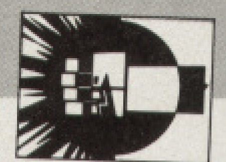




SUPER NES

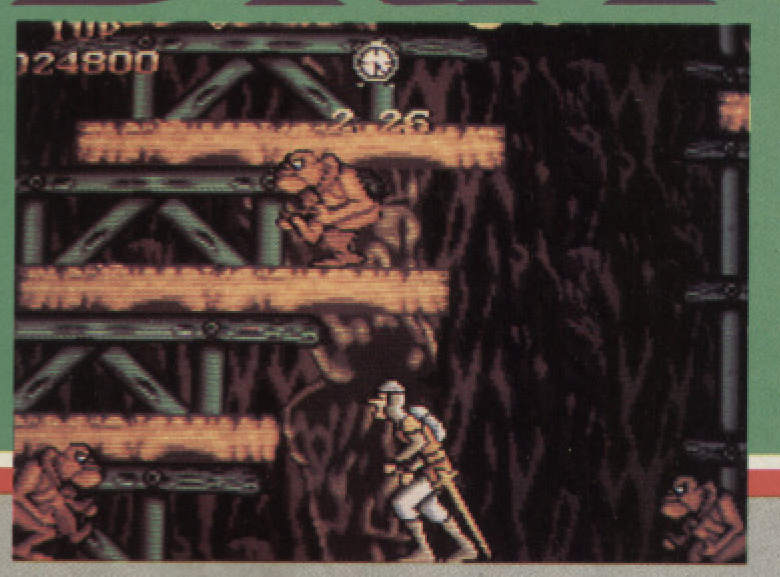


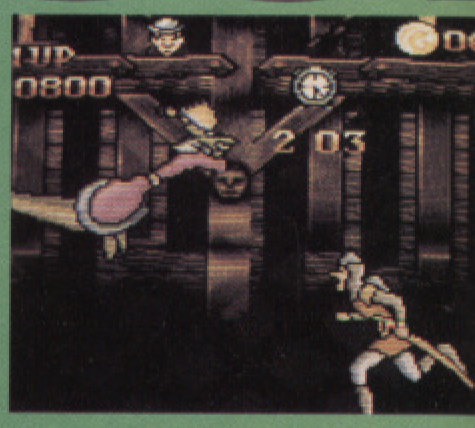




DRAGON

You've got to feel sorry for Dirk the Daring. Every time he rescues his girlfriend from the clutches of the Dragon King she's snatched straight back again. Wouldn't it just be easier all round if he just dumped her?
Super NES Dragon's Lair, Dirk's third Nintendo outing, once more pits Dirk against his scaled adversary in a sprawling platform quest. As usual special attention has been paid to the graphics, and as a result the sprites are big and well animated, the backgrounds are stuffed with parallax and detail and there's oodles of colour all round. The sound is great too, with the tunes being of the soothing variety and top quality. However, how will it fare when it gets down to gameplay?
Dragon's Lair doesn't really have much of a reputation





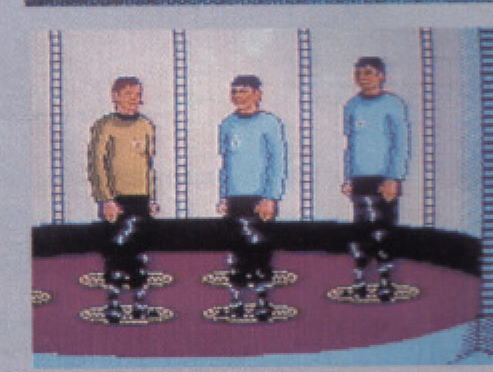
STAR TREK

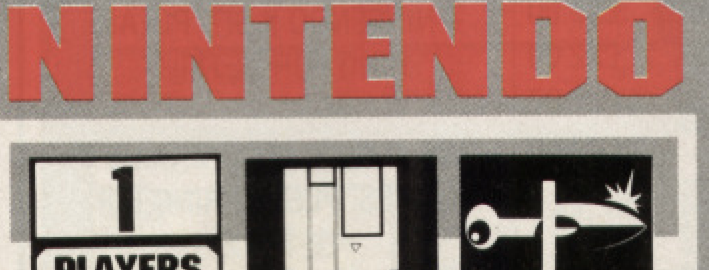
Trekkies rejoice! Your favourite sci-fi television series is about to warp it's way to a NES near you.
Ultra Games have managed to include all the style and intrigue of the hit series in a game based around the adventures of the crew aboard the Starship Enterprise. Star Trek is an action/adventure game which requires the player, as Kirk, to command the Enterprise through four different missions, all of which form part of the main goal which is to repair a hole in space. Funnily enough, this was caused when our hapless hero, Kirk, accidentally created during an experiment in warp travel. If all this seems too simple, bear in mind that the Enterprise was damaged by the ensuing blast when the hole was created and has blown the ship into the depths of uncharted space. Sounds cool eh? Well, rest assured. We'll be reviewing the game fully in the next few months













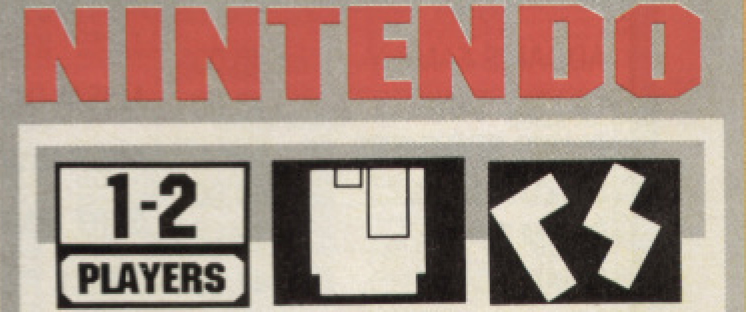


YOSHI

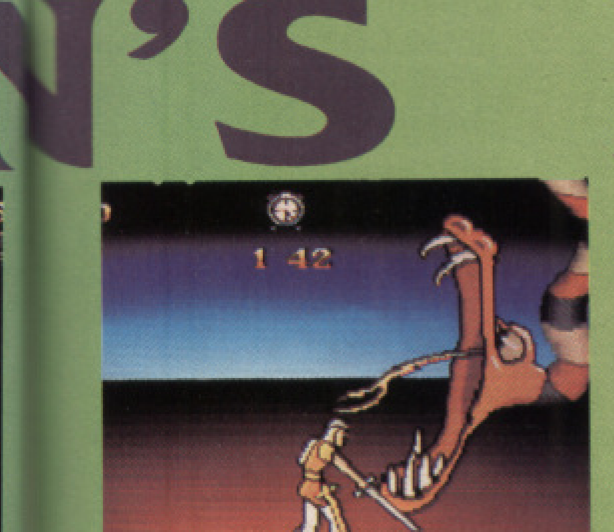
And today on World of the Inevitable, we preview the latest Mario spin-off - Yoshi. The lovable fire-breathing dragon makes his first solo outing in this Tetris-inspired puzzle game, co-starring none other than Mario himself!
For some reason, a number of Koopa clan allies are falling from the skies onto an arrangement of four trays. Every time two creatures the same land on top of each other, they disappear. It is up to Mario to stop the trays of evil reaching the top of the screen by switching the plates around.

Now, enter Yoshi. Every so often, a half egg will fall. Should it be the bottom half it will rest on top of the pile. The object now is to catch as many of Bowser's minions as possible between this and the top half of the egg which falls later. Once the egg is formed it hatches into a little Yoshi! The more enemies captured the bigger and more powerful Yoshi is, and the more bonus points awarded. This actually seems quite a diverting game, but those seeking full review treatment, especially concerning its lasting appeal, should await a future issue of our fab new Nintendo mag, NINTENDO MAGAZINE SYSTEM.





N'S LAIR

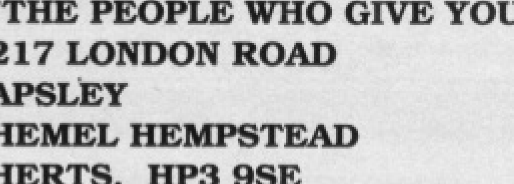
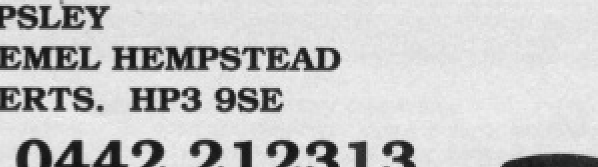
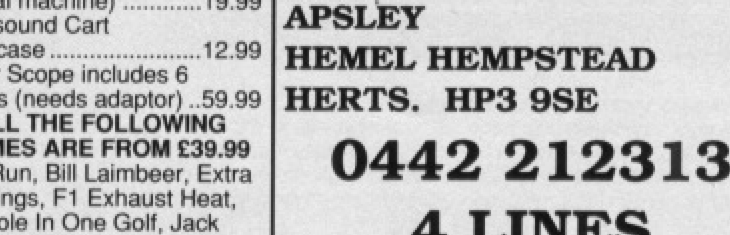




for quality, with only the Gameboy version ever achieving any sort of praise out of all the other versions, coin-op included! Rest assured the full lowdown will be revealed in an issue of NINTENDO MAGAZINE SYSTEM coming soon!



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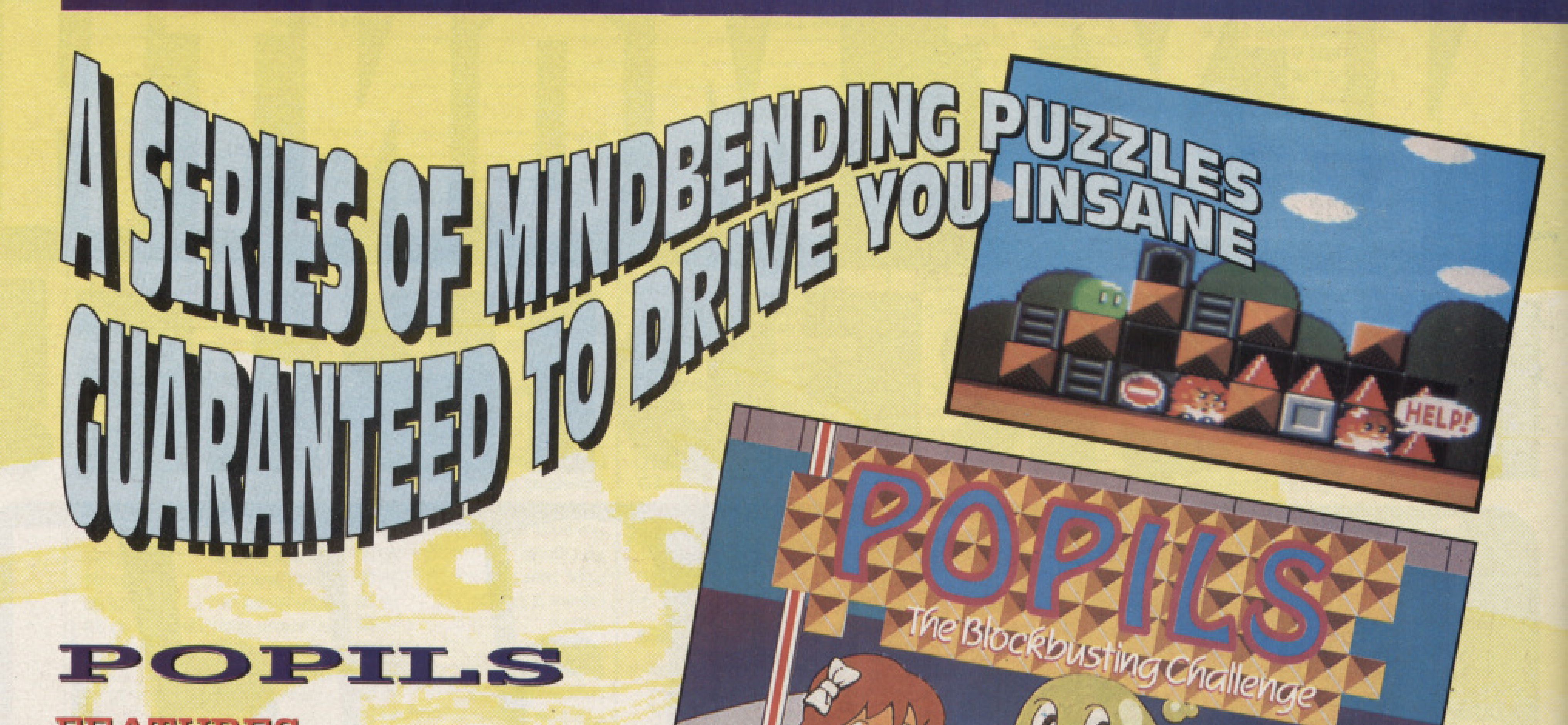
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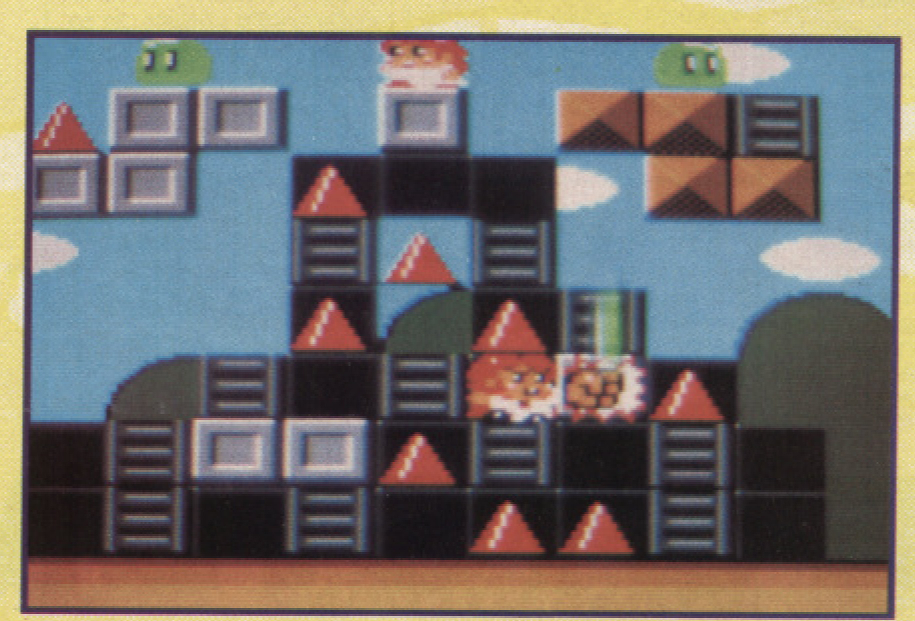
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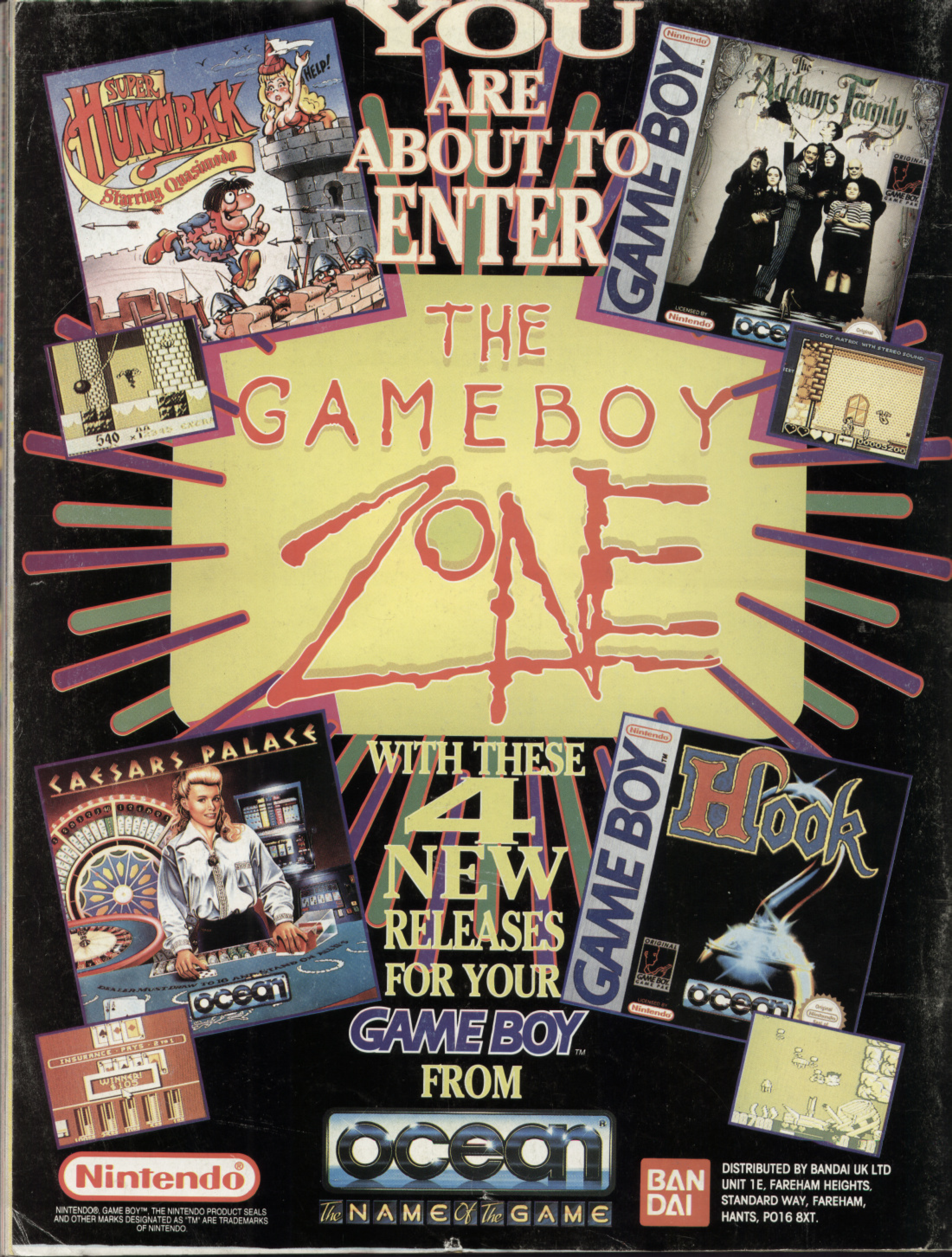
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